

Winter 2017

# Monarch

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Old Dominion University magazine | Winter 2017

# monarch

Chef Amy Brandwein | Across the political aisle | Stiths in the zone | NASA women soar





# Full Frame

Homecoming participants celebrated to beat the band last month. But, of course, no one can really beat the Monarch Marching Band, shown performing during Homecoming. The day also included victory on the field: a 6-0 triumph over Charlotte, the first football shutout in Old Dominion's history. See more Homecoming photos on Page 64.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF COREY NOLEN PHOTO







ODU



MONARCH



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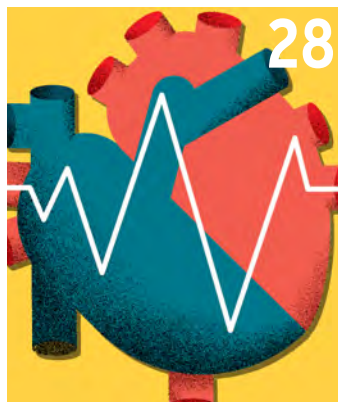
From conflict resolution to building schools, Berhanu Mengistu strives to improve conditions in the country where he grew up.

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### ON THE COVER

Illustrator Seth Patrick showcases the many applications of bioelectrics work at Old Dominion University, from fighting cancer to improving cardiac procedures. Read more about Old Dominion's Frank Reidy Research Center for Bioelectrics starting on Page 28.





# Letter from the President

I'm happy the winter issue of Monarch magazine is spotlighting the achievements of our Frank Reidy Research Center for Bioelectrics. Our researchers have demonstrated remarkable benefits from the use of rapid electric pulses – everything from stopping cancer in its tracks to decreasing the time it takes for wounds to heal.

Don't take it just from me. Two bioelectrics experts from Europe confirm in our report that Old Dominion is a worldwide leader in the field. The success of the Reidy center also proves the value

of our culture of collaboration and blending academic disciplines.

This issue of Monarch magazine will introduce you to other faculty who have produced distinguished work, leaving an impact far beyond our campus:

■ Ben Hamlington, an oceanographer, has completed path-breaking research that corrected previous assumptions on how land sinks. He recently was appointed research lead of NASA's Sea Level Change team.

■ Helen Crompton, in the Darden College of Education, serves as a consultant to two United Nations organizations on mobile learning, which Crompton believes could be the key to educating refugees.

■ Jennifer Fish, chair of the Women's Studies Department, launched a class to study issues facing refugees and help them adjust to life in America. "The refugees have taught me more than I could ever teach them," one student said.

■ Janet Peery, an award-winning creative writing professor, recently published a novel addressing addiction in multiple forms.

■ Berhanu Mengistu, in the Strome College of Business, has worked diligently to promote education and conflict resolution – one of his academic specialties – to improve conditions in his native Ethiopia.

We'll also introduce you to our nurse anesthetist program in Virginia Beach, which has near-perfect pass rates.

Not all of the fine work on campus is being shepherded by faculty. You'll learn of a powerful program – the Women's Initiative Network, co-founded by First Lady Kate Broderick and Board of Visitors member Pam Kirk – that pairs leading businesswomen with female students. It has had a profound effect, and not just on the students.

I wish you and your families a joyous holiday.

*John R. Broderick, President*  
Old Dominion University



# monarch

Old Dominion University magazine

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## Letter from the Editor

I'm an only child, but we have two sons who are pretty tight. So that might explain why I'm partial to the idea of pairing things up.

Like burgers and fries. Cereal and milk. And – one of my all-time favorites – beer and ice cream.

This tendency extends beyond my diet, as you'll see when you page through this issue of Monarch magazine.

One profile features two alums who are VPs for security at large organizations across the country from each other: Rob Kasdon helps protect New York Mets players and fans; Frank O'Donnell guards the sets and the people who work on them at Warner Bros.



Having moved to this position less than two years ago, I'm intrigued by job transitions. So we also feature two graduates who took unusual career turns. Michael Bates went from nurse to doctor; Michael Fisher switched from actor to YouTube tech reviewer.

And Monarch magazine dares to enter the dangerous political world of Washington, with profiles of two alums working on opposite sides of the aisle: Mike Henry, the chief of

staff for Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine, and Scott Weldon, the communications director for Republican Rep. Scott Taylor.

Both are sharp and funny, well-respected by their bosses and – most important – really good guys.

In a few articles, we couldn't stop at two subjects.

I asked Virginian-Pilot writer Denise Watson to profile top female alumnae at NASA. She found so many compelling subjects, she ended up writing about four top scientists and engineers at the agency.

Our story on the Stiths in men's basketball naturally had to include more than two people. You've got players and brothers Brandan and B.J. and their dad, Bryant, an assistant coach. Plus, we had to include another important household member whom you don't see on the court – mom and wife Barbara, who's also an ODU alum.

I hope all of these stories multiply your enjoyment of the current issue. Let me know what you think. Have a great holiday season.

*Philip Walzer*  
*Monarch Magazine and University Editor*

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## ODU FACTS

More than  
**4,000**

The record number of bachelor's degrees  
Old Dominion awarded to undergraduates  
in 2016-17.

## MOST AFFORDABLE

Business Insider, using data from the Chronicle  
of Higher Education, ranked Old Dominion the  
most affordable college or university in Virginia.

**No. 185**

ODU's ranking on Forbes' list of the country's  
**300 best midsize employers**,  
with 1,000 to 5,000 workers.  
ODU also ranked fourth in Virginia.

Look for  
**MONARCH EXTRA**,  
*our e-magazine, early  
next year and our  
next print issue in  
the spring.*



*A few articles in the spring issue evoked strong responses, and not all of them were positive. Here's some of what you had to say.*

## A POWERFUL STORY

In doing research on other universities' online newsrooms to suggest changes to my university's online newsroom, I came across your story on Jennifer Collins. It's a really incredible piece of writing and, sad as it is, a great story to read.

**Heidi Toth**  
Assistant director, communications  
Northern Arizona University  
Flagstaff, Arizona

## TWO SIDES ON TUNI SINGH

I happened upon the article on Tuni Singh's decision to forgo the treatments recommended by her physician for her stage III breast cancer and, instead, to use alternative medicine. Publishing this article is highly irresponsible and unacceptable for a university of higher learning.

I am a research scientist in the field of cancer immunology. FDA-approved cancer therapies result from rigorous science and testing through clinical trials. Alternative medicines have no empirical basis and result in worse survival rates. The article could encourage others with cancer diagnoses to forgo effective treatments.

Science and medicine are making massive leaps in our understanding of cancer. Misconceptions and false information work against this progress and cause harm to patients.

**David M. Woods '06, M.S. '10**  
Postdoctoral Fellow  
Laura & Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Center  
New York University Medical Center

Thank you so much for publishing the story on Tuni Singh. As an ODU graduate and Virginia cannabis nurse, I find it refreshing that ODU has the foresight to prepare our alumni to begin considering alternatives like cannabis therapeutics in addition to traditional medicine. Ms. Singh's story is an inspirational piece about taking responsibility for one's own health status and treatment regimen.

**Llewellyn Dawn Smith M.S.N. '09**  
Director at Large & Membership  
Committee Chairman  
American Cannabis Nurses Association  
Portsmouth

## HURT AND DISAPPOINTED

The magazine looks great, yet I am hurt and disappointed by components of the story "She's given Nat Turner's Bible a second life." Wendy Porter mentions the horror and dehumanization of slavery. Yet the article continues the dehumanization by referencing whites as "people" and blacks as "slaves." To all conscious people of African descent (such as myself), it hurts to not have our ancestors referred to as "people who were enslaved."

In addition, the story quotes Ms. Porter as saying: "Nat Turner killed people." However, it does not mention that Nat Turner killed in defense of his humanity and human right to be free. He, too, was killed under the brutal institution of slavery. It was not just white people who were killed.

**Michele K. Lewis '87**  
Chairwoman, Psychological Sciences  
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## CHEF ROBERT IRVINE COOKS UP A STORM



Amazing Day. Great campus with awesome people. Thank you!

**Robert Irvine**

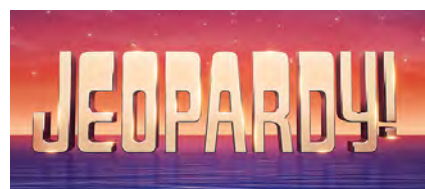
Awesome! Thank you Chef!

**Emma Baker**

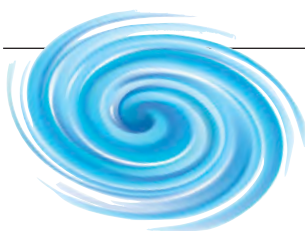
This is literally one of my favorite chefs from the Food Network. I'm so excited. LOL

**Gabrielle**

## WHAT IS OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY?



Old Dominion University made the big-time in October as the correct "question" on the TV game show "Jeopardy!" "The answer" cited the Norfolk Division of the College of William & Mary.



**AFTER THE STORM** Hurricanes have wreaked havoc across North America this year. We'd like to hear how you overcame their fury, both this year and previously. Send your memories and photos to [pwalzer@odu.edu](mailto:pwalzer@odu.edu)



# THEN AND NOW: ODU'S LIFELONG LINK TO LARCHMONT ELEMENTARY



*By James Sweeney*

**IT WAS LATE 1929.** Joseph E. Healy, the principal of Blair Junior High School in Norfolk, had a brainstorm.

Healy, who also was director of the College of William & Mary's extension classes in Norfolk, knew the city was the largest in the United States without an institution of higher learning. The Norfolk School Board had agreed to build a new elementary school in the Larchmont neighborhood. What if the old building at Hampton Boulevard and Bolling Avenue were used to house a two-year college?

Healy ran his idea by Robert Hughes, a prominent attorney and loyal W&M alumnus, who believed his alma mater should establish a

J.A.C. Chandler, the president of William and Mary.

It took a while, but in April of 1930 Chandler inspected the Larchmont School and found it suitable. Healy heard nothing more until the last day of the spring term at Blair, when Chandler called. Norfolk had agreed to deed Larchmont School to William and Mary for free!

So was born the two-year Norfolk Division of the College of William & Mary. Though few suspected it then, the division would later become a full-fledged independent research university with more than 24,500 students.

The gentlemanly transaction also foreshadowed a strong connection between the higher education

branch in Norfolk. Hughes called

institution and the elementary school.

The second Larchmont Elementary School, more than 85 years old, was recently torn down to make way for a new building, the third in its history, on Bolling Avenue. The school is committed to maintaining its close relationship with Old Dominion, said its principal, Dennis Fifer, who is — not surprisingly — an ODU alumnus.

The elementary school students, though, will be seeing less of the college students than they did in 1930.

In the division's first year, the college students ate lunch in the cafeteria of what was then the new elementary school. In March of 1931, the college's Dramatic Club performed its first production, consisting of three one-act plays, in the auditorium of the Larchmont School.



Converting the original Larchmont School, built in 1912, into a one-building college proved daunting. In addition to having the rooms painted, bringing in new furniture and converting the children's cloakrooms into offices, the division's director, Arthur Timmerman, had to update the building's inadequate heating system.

The student newspaper soon complained about the library, whose "new tables, chairs, desks and typewriters" were "really of no use in a library that has no books." The library had been converted from a gym, which posed challenges for phys-ed classes.

A. Rufus Tonelson, the third student to register at the division and later dean of the School of Education at ODU, recalled that PE classes "consisted of running down to the waterfront along Bolling Avenue and then running back." Since shower facilities were limited, "it was not unusual on the hot spring and summer days to ... just keep going and plunge in" the Elizabeth River.

Tonelson was not the only Old Dominion professor and administrator with ties to the original Larchmont elementary school.

Lewis W. Webb had been a student there. He returned to the building to teach courses in physics, engineering and calculus in 1931. Webb was hired under a joint agreement between William and Mary and Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and the division added VPI to its name.

The old school soon became known as the Science Building.

"So it was quite cozy, and everyone knew each other," Webb recalled. "When I first came, there were ten faculty members, about 200 students. ... We were assigned to teach most anything that came up."

The building later was called Old Academic and housed classes for more than four decades. "I loved the

place," said G. William Whitehurst, who taught there in the 1950s and early '60s. "It was solid. The classrooms were fine. The acoustics were OK."

Nonetheless, Old Academic came down in 1975. Administrators had decided that updating the old elementary school was not cost-efficient. Many, including Webb, who had since retired as Old Dominion's

***"We do a lot of back and forth. My last three hires went straight from (ODU) to student teaching and then to our classroom."***

*—Dennis Fifer '82, principal of Larchmont Elementary School*

president, mourned its passing. The site, now known as Brick Field, remains a popular spot for touch football and Frisbee play for ODU students and soccer practices for younger ones.

CeCe Stanfield '72, a retired elementary school teacher, has ties to all three Larchmont elementary buildings that span four generations. Her father, Walter Priest, was a student at the original Larchmont Elementary, and Stanfield later took college classes there. She taught at the second school for 24 years, and her granddaughter just entered kindergarten in the new school.

She recalled being impressed by the grandeur of Old Academic: "I loved the big hall when you went in and the big windows and the big classrooms... And it was old. I love old things."

But Stanfield also expressed excitement about the "wonderful new building." During a tour before classes began, Fifer, the principal, showed off the amenities, including a cafeteria/auditorium seating up to 700; enclosed outdoor play areas for pre-K and kindergarten, and a modern science lab.

Fifer, who received his bachelor's in business management from ODU in 1982, said five ODU education students serve as student teachers at Larchmont every year, and an additional 50 to 60 do their practicums there. The connection goes both ways: Last year, the fourth-graders visited the Batten College of Engineering and Technology for hands-on activities.

"We do a lot of back and forth," he said. "My last three hires went straight from (ODU) to student teaching and then to our classroom."

*Jim Sweeney, an associate professor emeritus of history, established the Department of Special Collections and University Archives in the University Library in 1974.*

*For more information about the new Larchmont Elementary School, go to [www.npsk12.com/Domain/51](http://www.npsk12.com/Domain/51).*





# A demanding chef who's in demand **AMY BRANDWEIN'S CENTROLINA** **IS D.C.'S HOT ITALIAN PLACE** *By Philip Walzer*



When she was at Old Dominion, Amy Brandwein '93, like most undergraduates, specialized in cooking ramen. Now she's serving up yellowfin tuna with roasted Shishito peppers in peach sauce and roasted young chicken with Swiss chard and crostini. Brandwein owns Centrolina, a hot restaurant in Washington.

*Photos by Jay Mallin*





The hip but friendly Italian bistro “sends out dishes that tickle all of the senses,” The Washington Post said. Brandwein, 47, received an even more impressive rave earlier this year: She was named a finalist for best mid-Atlantic chef by the prestigious James Beard Foundation.

**Her kitchen work** at Old Dominion didn’t foreshadow her culinary success, but maybe her upbringing in Arlington did.

Brandwein’s mother, who worked on Capitol Hill, took her to feminist rallies in Washington. “She instilled in me that I can do anything.” Brandwein was one of the few girls on her soccer team. It seemed like “everything was a struggle, but I got used to it.”

Her father was a sound technician for the Army and White House and cameraman for NBC News. At home, he tended a garden that produced spaghetti squash and green beans, and he made pizza.

From him, she got her love of cooking and respect for home-grown produce.

Her restaurant also features a market that sells locally grown vegetables, including patty pan squash, rainbow carrots and purple string beans.

“I believe in the ‘democracy of food.’ I want customers to have accessibility to all of the wonderful food I cook with. It shouldn’t just be for fancy chefs.”

From her mother, Brandwein inherited

a fearless disregard of gender barriers, which haven’t been toppled in the food industry. Even now, she said, it’s rare for a woman to be the chef/owner of a D.C. restaurant. As Brandwein rose through the ranks, “Some people were accepting. Some people were not and were very rude to me.”

During lunchtime on a weekday last summer, Brandwein supervised the “pass” – the long counter where dishes are set before they’re picked up by the wait staff. Brandwein was firm and demanding, occasionally turning back dishes, but without falling into the histrionics employed by reality-TV chefs:

“Two tunas right now. Table 38.”

“I need a little less aioli on this, OK?”

“I want you to control this situation and give me the pasta; it takes a minute to cook.”

Later, she said: “It’s important to show them what you want over and over again to be consistent. It drives me crazy when things aren’t cooked correctly. When someone complains about a meal, it breaks my heart.”

At one table near the pass, an exuberant longtime customer had no complaints. He told his lunchmate, new to Centrolina: “Everything

here is so good. The pastas are homemade and the portions are enormous.”

**Brandwein grinned** when explaining why she enrolled at Old Dominion: A boyfriend. “We broke up my first semester,” she said, but she didn’t regret the decision.

“I met all my best girlfriends to this day there,” she said. “I was a kid, running around, doing everything everyone else was doing – going to school, partying.” She also played rugby and belonged to Alpha Xi Delta.

Brandwein majored in political science. She assumed she’d work on Capitol Hill or as a lawyer after she graduated.

For a few years, she worked in Washington for a law firm, a lobbying firm and EMILY’s List, which supports female Democratic candidates. “I liked the legislative part of it; I loved to write,” she said. “I didn’t like the other part. I’m not so good at chitchat.”







## Here's one of Amy Brandwein's favorite recipes: ricotta gnocchi, with Swiss chard, brown butter and hazelnuts.

She had watched her father gardening and cooking, and she was getting in the groove, making pizza and pesto.

So she decided to go to culinary school.

Brandwein graduated from L'Academie de Cuisine outside Washington in 2001.

She rose from pastry plater to executive chef at a series of Italian restaurants in Washington. She wrestled with whether to open her own restaurant, but it ended up making sense.

"I would work very hard at every restaurant I was at," she said, "but I didn't want to spend any more time being part of somebody else's bad decisions."

**Centrolina was a hit** from the time it opened in June 2015 in the trendy City-Center shopping center. Its patrons have included Supreme Court justices Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and former Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

But it's not meant to cater to the elite.

"I wanted to blow up the idea that the only place you could get good Italian food was in a white-tablecloth atmosphere where everyone was wearing a coat and tie," she said. "I wanted people to have an excellent meal in a fun environment."

Another myth she hopes to shatter: Italian food "has to be rich and heavy to be good."

She acknowledged many chef-owners wouldn't be working the pass at lunch-time. "But what else am I going to do with myself? Shop?"

When asked how many hours a week she works, Brandwein checked her schedule on her phone. "Is that right?" she asked herself. "I guess that's right." The total was 80 hours.

However, "when I'm off," she said, "I'm not helicoptering from afar. I shut it down." She lives with her husband, Jeremy, a civil engineer, in Arlington.

**Centrolina has about 60** employees. Some of the top people, including the general manager, pastry chef and sommelier, are women.


That wasn't intentional, Brandwein said. It just happened that they were "the best fit and the most interested and they also were very smart and talented."

General manager Angie Duran, who previously worked with Brandwein, said her boss is democratic about more than food: "She loves to hear everyone's opinion. There's no ego involved. She'll ask servers point-blank: 'What do you think of this?'"

"And she believes in her staff. Today, we had a server who was with us for two years and we just moved him to a supervisor position. She really believes in nurturing everyone around her, just like with her food."

That openness extends to customers, too. Earlier in the summer, Brandwein put the veal ragu on hiatus. "I was thinking it was too hot for it. But they kept saying: 'When is it coming back?' So, I said, 'OK. We'll put it back on the menu Sept. 1.'"

The restaurant seats about 65 inside. Almost every chair was taken during the lunchtime rush. At the end of their meal, the regular customer and his friend had a little left over. He encouraged her to get a to-go box:

"I don't believe in throwing away any of Amy's food; it's too good to waste." 

### For the gnocchi

3.5 cups ricotta cheese  
2 whole eggs  
2 egg whites  
1 cup pasta flour  
1 cup Swiss chard  
1 pinch fresh grated nutmeg

In boiling salted water, cook the Swiss chard and then place in iced water. Drain immediately, and dry well. Chop into very small pieces.

Mix all the ingredients by hand in a mixing bowl. Roll into 1-inch balls and place on a sheet pan covered with parchment paper and a little flour.

### For the sauce

8 tablespoons butter  
4 sage leaves  
¼ cup Parmesan cheese

Boil a pot of water, and add salt. In a sauté pan over low heat, warm butter and add sage leaves. Continue until leaves are light brown.

Cook gnocchi in boiling salt water until they float to surface. Drain, and add to sauce. Add Parmesan cheese and one small ladle of cooked water. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Toss very well, adding a touch of butter and extra virgin olive oil.

Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese along with toasted and chopped hazelnuts. Serve hot.

Serves four.





## THE ATMOSPHERE

Centrolina has a bright, open feel, with white walls and a clear view into the kitchen. That's intentional, Brandwein said. "I like to see what's going on in the restaurant and the expressions on customers' faces when they're eating," she said.



## WHAT SHE DOESN'T SERVE

Although Centrolina's menu changes daily, you'll never see pizza or risotto on it. Why not?

"I spent one year cooking huge amounts of risotto every day. I was very good at it, but I can't eat it now. I can't even look at it."

As for pizza, "It's not good for business," Brandwein said. It ties up the oven and drives down revenue.



**M**ike Henry's first political memory dates to when he was 5 years old.

He was sitting with his parents at home in New Jersey watching President Richard Nixon deliver his resignation speech. Henry still remembers the dark suit Nixon was wearing.

His parents were Republicans. He wasn't sure about himself.

Henry found his political bearings at Old Dominion University, where he graduated in 1990 with a psychology degree.

"It was very comfortable to be a Democrat," Henry said.

"There was a sense of inclusion very similar to moderate Republicans in New England." Henry even missed a couple of days of class to volunteer for Doug Wilder's campaign for governor.

After Henry graduated, he got more involved in campaigns, eventually running them for the state's top Democrats – Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Mark Warner – as well as others including Florida Sen. Bill Nelson. He also was deputy manager for Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign in 2008.

The good thing about campaigns is "you're going to know who's going to win and who's going to lose," Henry, 49, said. "There's a lot of responsibility, but there's a lot of heartache when you lose."

In 2010, Henry needed a break from politics. So he joined the rock star Bono's One Campaign, helping organize grassroots support and programs for the organization, which seeks to end

poverty in developing countries.

Henry had run Kaine's successful campaign for governor in 2005. Kaine reconnected with him in 2011 after he decided to run for the Senate.

As Kaine recounted it in an email, "He told me how much he loved working on the One Campaign's anti-poverty mission. I said, 'Help me win this race, come be my chief of staff, and we will work on these issues together in the Senate.'"

Henry accepted the offer and has been Kaine's chief of staff since 2012, overseeing a staff of 50 and serving as the senator's unofficial adviser.

"I would not be where I am without Mike Henry!" Kaine wrote.

**For Henry**, the political heartache returned last year.

Clinton selected Kaine to be her running mate in the presidential election. Henry served as Kaine's senior adviser, accompanying him on all of his stops. And then came Nov. 8.

"It was a roller-coaster ride, one that I deeply enjoyed – except for that final night," he said.

But you won't hear any whining from Henry.

"I have to be on the top of my game and not get emotional about it. I don't have a lot of time to focus on spilled milk. It was deeply disappointing, but we have to move on to make sure we're successful in this office."

*By Philip Walzer*

*Photos by Roberto Westbrook*

**DEMOCRAT**

**MIKE HENRY:**

**TIM KAINE'S**

**'AIR TRAFFIC**

**CONTROLLER'**

At ODU, Henry counted G. William Whitehurst, a former Republican U.S. congressman, as one of his most influential professors. He mourns the loss of Whitehurst's "work-across-the-aisle" approach.

"Both parties are so polarized, it's really challenging to find common ground now," he said.

Kaine has sharply criticized President Trump on issues ranging from refugee policy to climate change, but "if President Trump came out with an infrastructure bill that had an impact in Virginia, I think he would work with him on it," Henry said.

Henry's main tasks as chief of staff are overseeing Kaine's schedule and the office's staff and budget. He also serves as an unofficial adviser, counseling the senator on votes, interviews and speeches.

Henry said his greatest accomplishment has been "building a strong staff who work well together and do good things for Virginians." Those things range from helping a senior citizen get a stalled Social Security check to the passage of Kaine's Troop Talent Act in 2013, which sought to expand educational and employment opportunities for veterans.


**In his email,** Kaine compared Henry to "the air traffic controller juggling multiple demands" and lauded his team-building skills:

"You could drop Mike into the midst of any organization that needs to succeed – campaign, agency, company, non-profit – and he would figure out how to get everyone organized around the central mission. He has a unique gift."

Just as important, Kaine said, are Henry's personal priorities. Henry lives in Fairfax County with his two daughters and his wife, Danyel '93.

The senator called him a "super-dedicated dad," leaving the office early to coach soccer "only to come back to work later in the day. He always sets an example – especially in a profession filled with young people learning what it means to build a career – of the importance of finding balance between professional success and a fulfilling personal life."

And he's humble – an uncommon trait in Washington. An organization recently told Henry he'd get an award for an initiative he had worked on with a staff member, Kaine wrote.

Henry wouldn't accept the award unless he could share it with the staffer. "Mike always celebrates others' accomplishments," Kaine said. 

## ON THE BOARD

*Henry has been a member of ODU's Board of Visitors since 2015. "I'm really encouraged by how much the board and administration care about the student experience, whether it's athletics, academics or the physical environment," he said. "They've done a great job with that."*



## MIKE HENRY ON THREE OF HIS BOSSES

**HILLARY CLINTON:** "She treats people extremely well. She's smart but tough. If you come into her office, you better have your facts straight. I do think she would have been one of our better presidents."

**TIM KAINE:** "He is thoughtful. You might not always agree with him, but he's always trying to do the right thing. He can definitely dive deep on policy, but he has a political side. He understands that to get the job done, he has to campaign all over the commonwealth and he needs to be accessible to everybody."

**BONO:** "He reminds me of Hillary and Tim in a lot of ways. There's a political side to him. But he's very engaged in the issues and is well-read."





**REPUBLICAN**  
**SCOTT WELDON:**  
**'ONE TWEET CAN**  
**CHANGE MY**  
**WHOLE DAY'**

*By Philip Walzer*

*Photos by Roberto Westbrook*

**U**

**S. Rep. Scott Taylor** is one of the most-interviewed members of Congress, and he's been in Washington not even a year.

Turn on the TV, and the Virginia Beach Republican is on CNN's "New Day." Or MSNBC. Or Fox News.

Taylor had been interviewed by national media before he was elected to the House in 2016. But he credits someone else for his ubiquitous presence on news shows.

"It's a direct result of Scott Weldon," Taylor said. "It's due to Scott's ability to communicate and build relationships with producers. No question about it, Scott is proactively getting us national hits several times a week."

Weldon '08 serves as Taylor's communications and political director and managed his successful campaign last year.

"I love getting him on TV," Weldon, 33, said. "He's a great person with a great message. It's my job to make sure a lot of people hear that and to help constituents understand the issues better."

**Weldon came to Old Dominion** from Bethesda, Md., on a swimming scholarship. He majored in history. What he didn't do was join the Young Republicans.

"I had no idea I was going to end up in politics," he said.

An internship with a PR firm led to work for a local City Council candidate. After that, Weldon couldn't shake the political bug.

He served as an aide or campaign manager to several Virginia Republicans, including Taylor's predecessor, Scott Rigell.

Last year, Taylor — then a state delegate — asked Weldon to

run his campaign to succeed Rigell. In the Republican primary, Taylor defeated longtime U.S. Rep. Randy Forbes, who had left his home district in Chesapeake to run against Taylor in a district that sits mostly in Virginia Beach. Forbes had outspent Taylor more than 10 to 1.

“Scott’s political savvy, his relationship-building, his ability to glue things together as a campaign manager were instrumental to my victory,” Taylor said.

Weldon called the primary win “the most exciting day of my life, except for my wedding day and the birth of my son.”

Managing campaigns doesn’t demand checking your morals at the door, he said. But the key to victory is “defining your opponent before he defines you.” Forbes’ move from his home district “was the fatal flaw of his candidacy, so he (Taylor) kept hitting at it.”

Weldon still bears a political scar from the campaign. The Republican Party in Chesapeake — where Weldon still lives and comes home every weekend to be with his wife, Laura ’09, and their 5-year-old, Quintin — last year refused to grant him membership.

“I’m not heartbroken, I can tell you. No matter what you do, there are some people who won’t like it.”

**Taylor praised Weldon’s** loyalty and affability — “It’s hard not to like Scott Weldon, which obviously serves him well.” He’s also a team player with a great sense of humor. “When things are stressful,” Taylor said, “his ability to put people at ease is crucial.”

Weldon jokes even about the tumultuous world of Washington. “One tweet can change my whole day,” he said, referring to President Donald Trump. “You just have to roll with the tweets and adapt.”

Taylor told MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” in September: “I support the president, but not blindly.” He has sided with Trump on many issues such as repealing Obamacare, reducing regulation and forcing Congress to decide the fate of the Dreamers immigrant program. But he called Trump’s response to the Charlottesville violence “a failure of leadership” and criticized his ban on transgender people in the military.

Taylor’s views on LGBT issues — he introduced a bill this year to outlaw housing discrimination based on sexual orientation — stem from his experience as a Navy SEAL, Weldon said. “It doesn’t matter what you look like or who you love; what matters is getting the job done.”

Weldon also parts ways with Trump in his view of the media.

“The press plays an integral role in how our country runs,” he said. “Ninety-nine percent of the reporters I work with have no agenda. They just want to get the information out there.”

So, Weldon said, he doesn’t “hide on the issues. Leaders have to lead.”

But he doesn’t belabor the issues either. The news releases that



### WHAT’S WITH ALL THE SCOTTS?

*Does it ever cause confusion that Weldon and his boss share a first name? “When somebody in the office says ‘Scott,’ we both look up,” Weldon said, adding, “It’s even more difficult when you replace someone with the same name.” Taylor succeeded Scott Rigell.*

Weldon writes are much shorter than most coming out of Washington — just a paragraph or two. “We put out what reporters can use, and that also allows us to do more,” he said.

Weldon also oversees Taylor’s social media. “The great thing about working with Scott Taylor” — who is 38 — “is that he’s young and energetic,” Weldon said. “He gets a lot of this.”

After Weldon arrived in Washington, “for the first month or two, I probably got lost 100 times” in the House building, trying to find the bathrooms or the gym. Now he knows his way.

Besides keeping him fit, the workout routine — which doesn’t include swimming — has helped him forge relationships with Democratic and Republican staffers.

“When you know somebody personally, it’s hard to be a jerk to them, although some people can still do it.”

Although Washington is seen as “dysfunctional and polarized,” Weldon said, “there’s a new class of Democrats and Republicans trying to work together. I know sometimes it’s hard to see from the outside, but it’s there. If you want to get something done, you have to put petty politics aside.” 🏆

### ANOTHER WELDON

Weldon’s twin brother, Kirk ’07, was also a member of the swim team. He’s a procurement analyst with Northrop Grumman near Baltimore.



**DOWN-TO-EARTH  
SUCCESS IN  
THE HIGH-END**

# Art





# World

By Teresa Annas

Photos by Donna Svennevik

**ON A BRILLIANT SUMMER DAY** in Manhattan's bustling Chelsea art district, two young women were changing posters in display cases, hustling to meet a deadline. Ryan Massey '09 and Radi Lyuben were dressed to labor in the heat: loose tops, running shoes, hair pulled up. Anyone might have taken them for recent grads doing grunt work.

Not so. They are the unpretentious co-owners of Massey Lyuben Gallery, set in what many consider the global center for contemporary art.

Massey, 30, knew the three posters were important even in this digital age, providing a streetfront presence to their gallery, which is tucked inside a building. In a neighborhood with more than 200 galleries, every edge matters.

"It looks good," she said, stepping back once the posters were in place. Lyuben took a few shots to post on Instagram and Facebook.

In five hours, Massey Lyuben Gallery would welcome the public for an opening reception for a show of works by a Dutch abstract artist and a New York figure and landscape painter. By 6 p.m., this hard-working, business-savvy duo would be wearing little black dresses, smiling and sipping champagne.

Until then, a slew of tasks remained. Declutter the gallery, set out price lists, race to Dollar Tree for wine cups, post installation photos.

"People think that galleries have all this access to money," Massey said.

"We're just a mom-and-pop shop – and most galleries in Chelsea are.

"It's just a lot of hard work."

**Massey got her first** tantalizing taste of organizing art shows while working on her bachelor's in art history: She co-curated an exhibition as an intern at the Hermitage Museum and Gardens in Norfolk.

Later, while studying decorative arts and design at Parsons School of Design, part of The New School in Manhattan, she got a job at a gallery then co-owned by Katharine Mulherin.

Mulherin was the first of several powerful female role models who influenced her direction. Massey discovered that "I love working with living artists, doing studio visits, handling the work – and knowing the work is going to a good home, where the collector is looking at it every day."

In 2011, Massey moved to another gallery owned by a woman, where she worked alongside Lyuben and saw they





*Getting started* Ryan Massey got her first hands-on experience with art as an intern at the Hermitage Museum and Gardens while she was an ODU undergraduate.

For her, the most memorable part was co-curating a show of objects in the museum's collection in need of conservation.

Kristin Law, then curator of collections, remembered Massey as "a rising star. She was a very hard worker, and very passionate about what she was doing." She assisted Law in myriad tasks, such as digitally cataloging the permanent collection and upgrading art storage.

Robert Wojtowicz, now dean of the Graduate School at ODU, supervised Massey's internship. He recalled being struck by "her perception, her insights, her critical-analysis skills - frankly, her ability to undertake and complete a really complicated project."

had strikingly similar tastes in art.

Two years later, Massey became executive assistant in the New York office of a top Danish architectural firm, Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG), working with BIG's CEO - yet another inspiring woman - and with Ingels, the visionary designer of 2 World Trade Center.

By then, she and Lyuben knew what it took to run a gallery. Lyuben had studied economics, business and museum management in college. Massey was honing her organizational and communication skills at BIG.

Both had socked away funds for years so they could be sole owners and investors, rather than seek partners who might want control over their operation.

Chelsea is a high-rent area, but they found a space they could afford - 763 square feet, with a teensy office and a 5-foot-wide storage area, where they could stash an entire show.

They signed a lease in September 2015. Help came "the moment we decided to take this giant leap of faith," such as a free logo from a designer friend (ML, with angled lines suggesting stacked canvasses) and a gratis couch, desk and chair.

They opened in November. "Basically, everyone we know showed up," Massey said. Three hundred people squeezed into their living-room-sized gallery that night.

Since then, openings have calmed down to roughly 100. Receptions occasionally bring sales, but more occur through the cultivation of potential collectors who walk in or visit the gallery's website and Artsy.net. The gallery has sold and shipped art to patrons as far as Hong Kong, Japan, Sweden and London.

Art magazines such as Juxtapoz, Blouin Artinfo and Fine Art Connoisseur have published positive reviews of their exhibitions, nearly all of which have yielded sales.

Massey Lyuben is not like the other galleries in Chelsea, said John Zinsser, a prominent artist who teaches a course at The New School on viewing contemporary art. "It comes across as much more genuine and grassroots."

The gallery specializes in painters and





sculptors who depict the human figure, but occasionally shows abstract artists such as Dutch artist Wouter Nijland. His heavily textured black paintings hung alongside Amanda Scuglia's paintings of forest figures that summer evening.

**Ninety minutes before** the reception, Massey sat before her laptop posting fresh shots of the show on [masseylyuben.com](http://masseylyuben.com). As usual, she followed her daily schedule, outlined on a computer spreadsheet, down to the minute: Pack art, deliver painting, check voicemail, send invoice, etc.

One or two people strolled in every few minutes.

A young woman with a British accent inquired about one of Scuglia's oil paintings and wanted to see a price list. "And is it possible to ship it internationally? I live in London." Yes, Massey assured her.

After she gave her email address to Massey and left, Massey sent her Scuglia's bio, a photo of the piece and an invitation to the opening, starting in an hour.

Such follow-ups have scored sales. And when that happens, Massey notes whether the buyer was a walk-in or saw the work on a website or on social media.

"I'm a bit of a control freak. I track everything," she said. "It shows us where to emphasize."

Just after 5 p.m., Scuglia dashed in and glanced around. "Oh my God!"


"Do you like it?" Massey asked. "I love it!"

Amy Stockdale, their new part-time worker, arrived at 5:30 and began the final touches, setting out plastic cups for wine and water.

She, the artist and the owners popped open a bottle of champagne for a quick pre-celebration. All were dressed in black. Massey had ducked into the storage closet for her quick-change, yanking a jersey-knit dress from her backpack.

At 6 p.m., a man in a Hawaiian shirt and checked sneakers loped in and scrutinized Nijland's abstracts. Two women speaking Japanese made a beeline for Scuglia's work. The party had started.

Massey spent 15 minutes chatting with guests, then wandered alone to stand by the entrance. The gallery was filling. She scanned the room, then appeared to go inward, centering herself to focus on the task of the moment.

"Now," she thought, "it's time to make sales." 

*Longtime arts writer Teresa Annas enjoyed her peek into how a small New York gallery operates, but she will not be opening her own anytime soon.*

## *Why is Ryan Massey's gallery succeeding?*

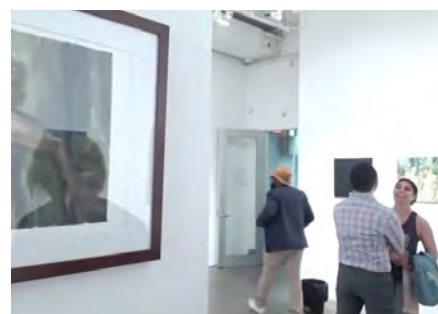
"When people walk through that door and talk to Ryan, they realize that her attitude is not about snobbing on people," said John Zinsser, a prominent artist who teaches a course at The New School in Manhattan. "It's very much a place where somebody could begin to collect art."

Citing the gallery's affordable prices, consistent aesthetic vision and lack of pretension, he said, "It's like a model of entrée into a world that's otherwise closed off to people." The price range for the early summer show was \$500 to \$6,400.

Massey was his teaching assistant in 2011.

Amanda Scuglia, whose paintings were exhibited in the show, said she has sold well at Massey Lyuben.

"I just think they are extra-approachable," the artist said. "When you talk to Ryan, she sounds like a down-to-earth, warm, welcoming person. Sometimes Chelsea can be really intimidating, especially to younger collectors. She erases those fears."



**Check out the opening reception for the art show that Ryan Massey was preparing for at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5iVI9\\_mmcY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5iVI9_mmcY)**



# ROCKETING TO THE TOP AT NASA

By Denise Watson

PHOTO: ROBERTO WESTBROOK



Anna-Maria McGowan

**Anna-Maria McGowan's** son reminded her years ago of one of her most important roles in science.

He was 4 at the time. Mom and son were having a play date with several fellow female engineers and their children. One of her male colleagues joined them. When McGowan told her son that he worked with them at Langley, the youngster crinkled his nose and shook his head.

"That can't be, Mom," McGowan recalled him saying.

She asked him why.

"Only mommies can be engineers," he said.

Old Dominion is doing its part to bring more women into industries of science. McGowan is one of more than 250 alumni working at NASA in roles of leadership, aeronautical research and aviation safety.

Here are the stories of four ODU graduates, who, like the real-life characters in "Hidden Figures," overcame obstacles to rise at NASA.

**Christine Belcastro** and her identical twin, **Celeste**, grew up in Hampton, always interested in math and science.

The girls assumed they'd go into medicine; their father was a pharmacist.

"The rub is that we didn't want to work on patients," Belcastro said. "We wanted to find a cure for cancer. We wanted to develop a correction for people with spinal cord injuries. ... We wanted to be able to invent new technologies that improved people's lives."

When Belcastro asked her high school counselor about careers in science, she was told that she'd have to take physics. That, the counselor said, would be too hard for her.

Fortunately, she met a dean at Thomas Nelson Community College who gave her a pamphlet about engineering. Belcastro shared it with her sister. They graduated from ODU in 1980 with bachelor's degrees in electrical engineering and started working at NASA a month later. They went on to earn their master's degrees in engineering from ODU in 1986 and got their doctorates in 1994.

The Belcastro sisters eventually worked together in aviation safety. Both also mentored young girls, particularly through the Society of Women Engineers, which worked with the Girl Scout Council to add an engineering patch to the Scouts' options.

In 2008, Celeste Belcastro was diagnosed with cancer. She died



six months later. Flights based on the research the sisters and their teams worked on were conducted from 2009 to 2011.

"It was bittersweet because we'd gotten to that point of testing, but she wasn't there," Christine Belcastro said.

Yet they fulfilled their dream. "Our interest in medicine was to save people's lives, but we got a chance to do that in the engineering domain," she said. "It turned out to be a perfect career avenue for us."

**Gale Allen** grew up in Onancock on the Eastern Shore, great in science like the Belcastro sisters, but not seeing it in her future.

She got married out of high school, became a mom and didn't start college until she was 22. She received a chemistry degree at Norfolk State University and was often the only female in her class. The composition of the classes didn't change much at ODU, where she received a master's in 1970. Her adviser at ODU, however, worked at NASA Langley and got Allen into a research program looking at the thermal protection system for the space shuttle.

"I got the bug," Allen said. "I was sitting around the table with all these really smart people when we were doing research, talking about results, and I felt I was part of the team."

She worked at Langley, spent a few years with the Navy, returned to NASA, picked up her MBA and doctorate and moved up the ranks. Allen worked at the Kennedy Space Center in 1991 as chief of the materials and chemistry branch. When she climbed inside the shuttles Columbia and Endeavour, she'd often think: "This is a dream."

Allen moved to NASA headquarters in Washington in 2011, where she is now acting chief scientist, serving as the principal adviser to the NASA administrator and for the agency's science programs.

Like Belcastro, she feels a duty to mentor other women bound for the world of science: "It's up to the next generation to keep blazing the trail."

**Anna-Maria McGowan** had the fortune of growing up with parents who saw her interest in aeronautics early and pushed her to pursue it.

Her parents had come from Trinidad with one suitcase, hoping to make the most of the educational opportunities in this country.

The family lived in Northern Virginia near Dulles International Airport. Anna-Maria's parents saw their daughter's fascination when airplanes took off. Her 16th birthday cake was shaped like a plane.

When her guidance counselor laughed at the idea of her becoming an aerospace engineer, McGowan and her parents were not dissuaded.

She studied aeronautical engineering at Purdue University and became a co-op student at Langley in 1988. She then studied at ODU's Peninsula campus and received her master's degree in aerospace engineering in 1999. Later, she earned a doctorate.

McGowan, who received a Distinguished Alumnus award last year, is a technical fellow for complex systems design. She likes to tackle issues such as how technology can improve and complicate everyday life. For example, drones could be programmed to deliver pizza. But what happens if they malfunction and crash in the middle of a soccer field during a match?

She often works with children, from girls to her son's Boy Scout group, to dispel myths such as women can't simultaneously be mothers and scientists, or that creative personalities can't flourish in science. "I believe the idea of the nerdy engineer is going out the window," she said.

"The iPhone wasn't created with that mentality."



Gale Allen

*Denise M. Watson is a features writer with The Virginian-Pilot who enjoys writing about women in science, but wishes she could pronounce half of the words that engineers use.*

*"We had worked in different buildings, of course, but we were always together. We lived together, rode to work together. We were as integrated as a team that you can be."*

*—Christine Belcastro about her twin sister, Celeste*



Christine Belcastro



# They maintain safety on the field... and the set

By Marc Davis

**H**ere's something you don't see at every baseball game. Rarer than a no-hitter or a triple play — a fan trying to blind the pitcher with a laser.

It happened in 2007 at New York's Shea Stadium. A crazed fan from the Bronx parked himself behind home plate and aimed his laser on Braves pitcher Tim Hudson. Then he tried it on the shortstop, then an umpire.

Security found him and police arrested him.

Rob Kasdon, the Mets' vice president for security, told the New York Post that he's responsible for the safety of opposing players and coaches, too. "We take that very seriously. This man last night created a very dangerous situation."

Kasdon, a 1972 ODU grad, can't help the Mets on the field, but it's his job to protect all players and fans at home at Citi Field and on the road.

It's no small task. Citi Field seats nearly 42,000 people. The Mets draw nearly 3 million a year. "A good day is when everyone goes home safe and happy and we win."

**What Rob Kasdon** does on the East Coast, Frank O'Donnell '70 does on the West Coast, and on almost the same scale.

O'Donnell is senior vice president for worldwide corporate security with Warner Bros. He's based in Burbank, Calif., at the huge studio where some of the most popular TV shows and movies have been produced: "The Big Bang Theory," "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," "Wonder Woman" and more.

Every day, 12,000 employees work at the studio. An additional 4,000 visitors take tours. O'Donnell's job is to make sure all of them leave the lot in the same condition that they arrived in.

O'Donnell also oversees security for productions and movie premieres around the world. He supervised security in July for star-studded premieres of the movie "Dunkirk" in Paris, London and New York. "On a good day, all the buildings are still standing and no one gets injured," O'Donnell says.



PHOTO: MARC S. LEVINE/NEW YORK METS

**If Warner Bros. made a movie** of Kasdon's and O'Donnell's lives, it would be a comedy. It would star two guys who are almost exactly the same age, go to the same college, cross paths on campus almost every day and yet somehow never meet. And then they go on to have almost identical careers — finally meeting each other years later.

The similarities are uncanny.

Kasdon is 68, O'Donnell 69.

Both belonged to fraternities at ODU — Kasdon to Tau Kappa Epsilon, O'Donnell to Alpha Tau Omega (now defunct).

Both pursued majors that didn't lead to their careers — Kasdon in education, O'Donnell in political science.

Both joined local Virginia police forces after graduation — Kasdon in Norfolk, O'Donnell in Arlington.

Both had long careers in the Secret Service, which is where they finally met, and both started their current jobs around the same time — Kasdon in 2003, O'Donnell in 2001.

One more thing: Both protect celebrities, but both keep a professional distance.

O'Donnell doesn't go out drinking with movie stars, not even celebs he admires, like Clint Eastwood. Mainly he worries about how to protect his famous clients on the lot and on the road. Anyone can buy a \$52 ticket to tour the studio.



Kasdon is a lifelong baseball fan – he rooted for the Brooklyn Dodgers in the 1950s – who feels paternally protective of his baseball stars, many of whom are young enough to be his grandsons. At a breakfast over the summer at the hotel in Washington where the team was staying, he gently urged a visitor not to interrupt the players and their families. “People always come up to them and say, ‘I hate to interrupt but...’ and then they interrupt,” Kasdon says.

Both have plenty more responsibilities than protecting highly paid celebrities and visitors.

For O’Donnell, a top one is controlling traffic on the 102-acre Warner Bros. lot. Signs warn drivers that the speed limit is 8 mph, which seems odd since the security team can’t issue city traffic tickets. But it can issue Warner Bros. tickets. Two violations and the driver loses lot privileges.

For Kasdon, it’s protecting fans at Citi Field from foul balls.

This summer, the Mets extended the netting along the first-base and third-base lines. Not everyone loves it. The New York Times’ headline: “Eyesore or Blessing? New Safety Feature at Citi Field Divides Fans.”

Kasdon is proud of his team for making the move. “We’re one of the leaders in the majors.”

**Finally, both men** give back to their alma mater.

They know it’s hard for students to make ends meet. O’Donnell worked as an attendant at a Norfolk psychiatric ward during college. Now, he attends annual fundraisers for ODU and supports the University.

“ODU taught me interpersonal skills. It’s where I learned to get along with others,” he says.

Kasdon waited tables at the King’s Head Inn and pumped gas at the Shell station during college. Today, he endows a scholarship that benefits two students.

“If it wasn’t for Old Dominion giving me a couple of chances, my life would have been very, very different,” he says.

*Marc Davis is a long-suffering Mets fan and a former Virginian-Pilot editor and reporter. The high point of his childhood was walking on the field at Shea Stadium on Banner Day in 1969.*



Frank O'Donnell

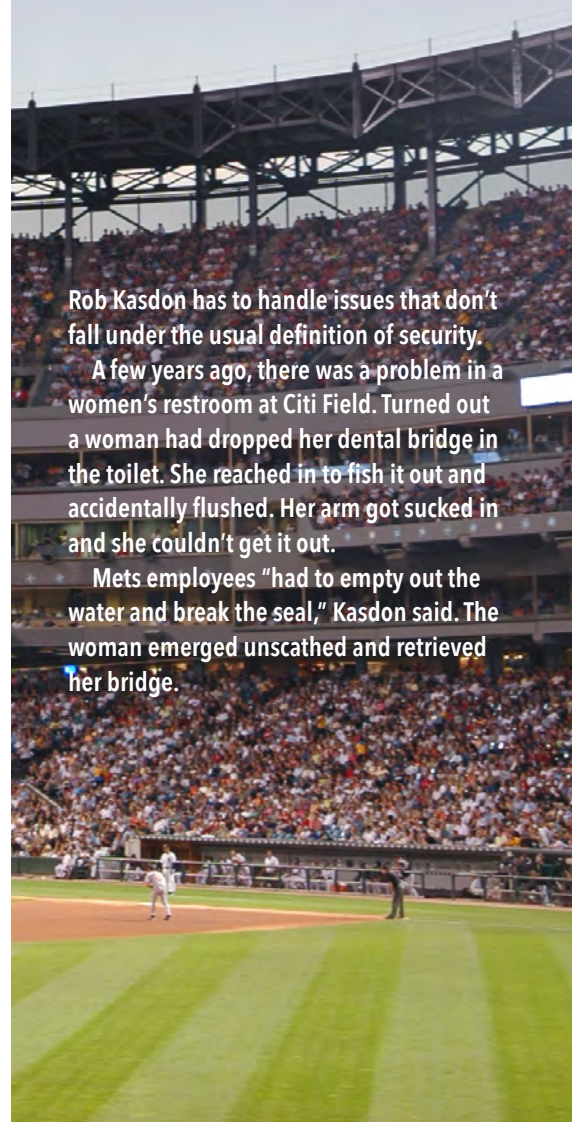
## Here are Rob Kasdon’s tips for staying safe at the ballpark:

- When you go in, make a mental note of the primary and secondary exits and the routes to the exits.
- Pay attention to announcements regarding safety procedures.
- Designate a point to meet family/friends in the event of an emergency.
- Report all suspicious persons or situations (trust your instincts) to a staff member.
- Safeguard your possessions.
- Be alert.
- If you see something, say something.

Rob Kasdon has to handle issues that don’t fall under the usual definition of security.

A few years ago, there was a problem in a women’s restroom at Citi Field. Turned out a woman had dropped her dental bridge in the toilet. She reached in to fish it out and accidentally flushed. Her arm got sucked in and she couldn’t get it out.

Mets employees “had to empty out the water and break the seal,” Kasdon said. The woman emerged unscathed and retrieved her bridge.



# Angela Jackson: She's a winner to her players

By Tom Robinson

**A**ngela Jackson '91 might be the only college basketball coach to receive paradoxical praise from a national newspaper while enduring a winless season.

The headline of The New York Times article in February read: "Her Team Is 0-24, but She Might Deserve Coach of the Year Honors."

For 14 years, Jackson has been head coach of the Chicago State University women's basketball team, which ended the season 0-29 and has lost 36 in a row.

Nevertheless, her players and opposing coaches share the newspaper's assessment of her.

When the team tried to hold pity parties, Jackson quickly shut them down, says senior captain Konner Harris, who calls Jackson "a great mentor."

"What she preached the most," Harris says, "is that you don't go anywhere in life feeling sorry for yourself. She made sure we knew we had to wake up and do our job every day."

What made that job so tough was a financial crisis that endangered the university's survival.

Founded 150 years ago, Chicago State serves a predominantly low-income African-American population. For two years, the state of Illinois went without a budget, drastically reducing the school's funding.

Only 86 freshmen enrolled last year, and rumors of the school's impending closing decimated basketball recruiting. But that cloud lifted over the summer, when Illinois approved a budget that restored funding for Chicago State.

"It gives us a little more of a security blanket," says Jackson, who actually was her league's coach of the year six years ago.

"Hopefully, we can get into more (recruits') homes now than we've been able to the previous couple of years."

**Raised in Detroit**, Jackson transferred to ODU from Odessa College in Texas in 1988, the second of Wendy Larry's 24 seasons as head coach.

A 5-foot-8 guard, Jackson averaged 10.3 and 16.6 points, respectively, in two seasons. The Lady Monarchs won one Sun Belt Conference title and advanced to the second round of the NCAA tournament both years.

"ODU was a great experience," she says. "I had a great coach, and teammates that were very passionate and caring. I loved it."

Jackson finished her degree in health and physical education while working as a student assistant coach. She landed on the staff at Wayne State in Detroit.

"I knew coaching was where I wanted to be," Jackson says.

She was an assistant at Michigan State and Michigan for more than a decade before arriving at Chicago State in 2003. The program was on NCAA probation for rules violations under the previous coach.

"Sometimes you don't know your purpose in life," Jackson says. "But after a few years here, I just felt like I was in the right place."

Jackson slowly built her Cougars into a conference contender and champion.

They won the now-defunct Great West Conference and went 24-11 in 2010-11, the year of Jackson's top coaching honor.

But lean times followed.

The Great West Conference died. Chicago State became the eastern-most member of the travel-intensive Western Athletic Conference. Then, the financial storms.

The Cougars are 21-156 the last six years, with only three victories in four seasons in their new league.







PHOTO: KRISTEN NORMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

“Hopefully, that will change here rather quickly,” Jackson says. Last season, injuries and attrition limited the Cougars to seven players for much of the schedule. Still, they led or were tied at halftime seven times, and even in their final game trailed by only a point at the half.

“We recognized that we were at a numerical disadvantage,” Jackson says, “but we weren’t going to make excuses.”

Six losses, including one in overtime, were by a margin of six points or fewer.

“We had a lot of close games; we just ran out of gas,” says Harris, the captain. “We didn’t have enough legs.”

**The current season is crucial** for Jackson, whose contract runs out in 2018.

“Personally, I can only give 100 percent and let the chips fall where they may,” says Jackson, who earns \$99,996 a year, according to the Illinois Board of Higher Education salary database.

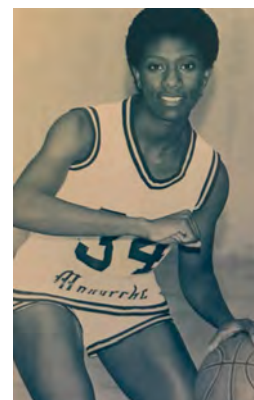
“I’m a big fan of Coach Jackson and what she’s done in the past,” says Tracy Dildy, Chicago State’s men’s basketball coach and the school’s interim athletic director for the past year. “I would love to see Angela have a great year, and I think she can.”

Utah Valley State’s Cathy Nixon has coached against Jackson for a decade. She says she respects Jackson’s work.

“Angela’s teams are always scrappy and competitive, regardless

Angela Jackson and Regina Miller '84 (right) are the only ODU alumnae among Division I head coaches. Miller works near Jackson at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

“Regina actually recruited me to Old Dominion,” Jackson says. “It’s very interesting for us to end up in the same city.”



of what their record is,” Nixon says.

Jackson says she thirsts to win again. But her main goal is to guide young women through their college-age transitions.

“I feel like I add something positive to the lives of the student-athletes we get here,” she says. “They understand I’m here for them not just for basketball but for any other parts of their life when they move on. That’s kind of been my niche.”

*Tom Robinson is a former Virginian-Pilot sports columnist. A team of Little Leaguers once reached the state tournament despite his “coaching.”*

# Michael Fisher '08: From actor to YouTube tech reviewer

By Kate Mishkin

In his younger days, Michael Fisher dreamed of being an actor with a little bit of fame. These days, people stop him on the street, but not for a performance in a play or TV show.

Fisher is otherwise known as MrMobile, the YouTube presence who reviews all things technological. When he graduated from Old Dominion University in 2008, the job didn't even exist.

Fisher came to ODU with hopes of joining the Navy, left with a degree in theater and ended up doing something else. But in a way, he's been preparing for his current gig his entire life.

A self-described Star Trek geek, Fisher has always been interested in gadgets and camera work. He started combining the two in 2006, when he and his father built model boats and submarines and Fisher would film them in action on Long Island, N.Y.

The transition from acting and voiceover work, he says, was natural — he's been a technology enthusiast his entire life.

In 2016, he was approached by Mobile Nations, another tech website, and was soon tapped to launch MrMobile. Now, he uploads videos at least twice a week, and his reviews span from cars to phones to headphones. His work takes him to conventions from Berlin to Barcelona.

In his reviews, which range from 5 to 10 minutes, he talks directly to his audience over poppy, upbeat music.

Fisher's fans sing his praises in the comments section: "The fact that MrMobile doesn't have 1 million subscribers pisses me off. He is the best tech reviewer on YouTube hands down," a commenter wrote in September.

Another called his reviews "always precise and accurate." But they're not just for tech nerds.



He uploaded the videos onto YouTube for fun, but was surprised when he got a note from Google telling him to file tax information so he could claim his earnings. That was his first inkling he could make money on YouTube.

At Old Dominion, he spent lots of time on stage and also appeared in a Discovery Channel show, regional commercials and short instructional videos produced by the Navy.

After graduating, he did voiceover work recording books on tape for law students. He'd unwind after rehearsals by reading technology blogs, and began wondering if he could make a living doing that. In 2012, Fisher was hired by Pocketnow, a technology website, to write reviews and produce videos.

"It's nice to be able to try, as MrMobile, to serve the audience of hardcore, frothing tech nerds who want to talk about silicon and clock speeds and all this stuff, but also cast a wide enough net where I can pull in people who are on the fringe," Fisher, 34, says.

Fisher, who lives in Boston, won't predict what he'll be doing in five years. Five years ago, he couldn't have fathomed his current career.

Now, he says, "I can't imagine doing anything else."

To see Fisher's reviews, go to [www.youtube.com/theMrMobile](http://www.youtube.com/theMrMobile).

Kate Mishkin is a reporter for the Daily Press. She's slowly warming up to technology and is the proud owner of an iPhone 5.





## Michael Bates '05: From nurse to doctor

By Philip Walzer

**W**hen Michael D. Bates started at Old Dominion in 2001, he was already a nurse. By the time he graduated in 2005, he had decided to become a doctor.

Bates, who grew up in South Boston, Virginia, had followed his older sister's path to nursing. He received his nursing diploma at Danville Regional Medical Center's School of Nursing and worked as a critical care nurse for a few years, including at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital.

Bates received a bachelor's in nursing from Old Dominion in the spring of 2005. That fall, he entered the University of Virginia Medical School.

"I enjoyed working as a nurse, but I just saw medical school as a way to keep progressing," he said. "I wanted to learn a little bit more. I was always talking to doctors to try to understand illnesses better."

His experience at ODU's Pre-Health Club, under adviser Ralph Stevens, crystallized his decision.

"I had some thoughts about medical school, and there were

other people thinking the same way I did," said Bates, now 37. "It gave me a lot of practical knowledge that I needed to be successful in applying to medical school."

After med school, he won a one-year fellowship at New York's Hospital for Special Surgery and later began practicing in North Carolina.

Bates had anticipated specializing in pulmonology or cardiology, but he became an orthopedic surgeon: "There was something very appealing to me about manipulating the human body to try to improve someone's health and to be able to actually see that person get dramatically better after you do the surgery."

He recalled a young woman whose hip became severely deformed after a car accident and multiple surgeries. After he performed complex hip replacement surgery, "She went from being a depressed 26-year-old who was very dependent on her family to a very confident, independent person who reclaimed her life."

Bates said his nursing background has made him a better doctor. "Nurses are the primary point of contact with patients and their families. I don't think you know what you're missing if you've never experienced it."

For Bates, that experience also reaffirmed the value of involving nurses in decisions on patient treatment.

"When you get medical professionals talking to each other, you get a true understanding of the patients' challenges and what things need to be addressed," he said. "I'm not going to say it's the norm, but I think it's become much more common for physicians to realize how important that process is."



**Bates is married to a doctor, Tiffany Bates, who specializes in obstetrics and gynecology. They met at U.Va., when he was in med school and she was an undergraduate.**

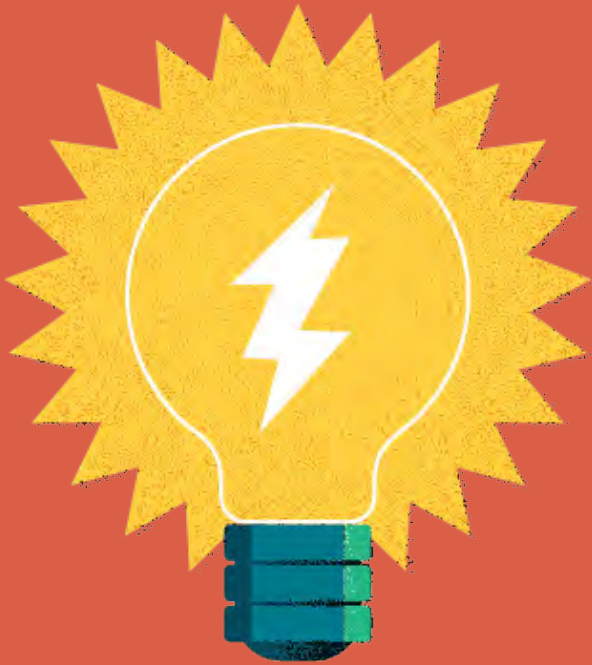
**They underwent another big transition over the summer: First, they moved from Greenville to Charlotte, giving him the opportunity to teach medical residents.**

**And in August, they became parents, with the birth of Michael Weston Bates.**

# BIOELECTRIC RESEARCH

# JOLTS

## THE STATUS QUO



*By Philip Walzer*

*Illustrations by Seth Patrick*

*Portraits by Matthew Pierce '17*

On two floors of Innovation Research Park I on Monarch Way, 76 faculty, staff and students are more than living up to the building's ambitious name.

They work for the University's 15-year-old Frank Reidy Research Center for Bioelectrics, which has gotten big results from fast jolts. The researchers have proved that lightning-quick blasts of high-voltage electricity, lasting just billionths of a second, can generate significant therapeutic effects on the body.





**CANCER WAS THE INITIAL FOCUS**, and still one of the major research pursuits, of the Reidy center. The findings: Not only can these nano-pulses efficiently kill cancer cells, they also avert the recurrence of the cancer.

The results alone would have been groundbreaking. But the center's work has branched out to uncover other significant medical benefits, including:

- Speeded-up wound healing.
- A safer form of defibrillation.
- A less-invasive means of heart ablation, in which cardiac tissue is scarred to control arrhythmia.

Other potential applications range from food decontamination to reducing the plaque that forms in the brains of Alzheimer's patients.

"Four to five years ago, we had all of these dreams," said Richard Heller, a professor and former director of the center. "Now we're seeing it all happen. That's not a usual occurrence in science."

The breakthroughs paved the way for two milestones for the center this year:

- Old Dominion scored the biggest commercialization success in its history – and the largest for a Virginia university in 2016-17 – with a transfer to the University and its researchers of shares worth \$41.6 million in Pulse Biosciences, a California company that acquired about 20 patents for work done at ODU.

- In September, Old Dominion hosted a worldwide bioelectrics conference at Hilton Norfolk The Main, drawing more than 350 researchers from 30 countries.

Participants vouched for Old Dominion's leading role in the specialty:

"They are the major player in the field, not only in biomedical applications, but in other aspects, as well," said Gregor Sersa, head of the department of experimental oncology at the Institute of Oncology Ljubljana in Slovenia. "We are going to join our efforts more and more in the future."

The success of the Reidy center rests not just on impressive resumes and state-of-the-art equipment, but also on a collaborative, check-your-ego-at-the-door mindset. The center brings together experts from science, engineering and medicine.

"I can walk down the hallway and bump into an engineer or another biologist, get into a casual conversation and all of a sudden we have a project," Heller said. "You miss that opportunity in a lot of other places."

That spirit of cooperation permeated even the discussion on how to split the money from Pulse, Heller said. "You know how long it took us to come up with a fair way to do it? Half an hour. There was no argument. Everybody was on board with it right away."

#### 'Let's work on melanoma'

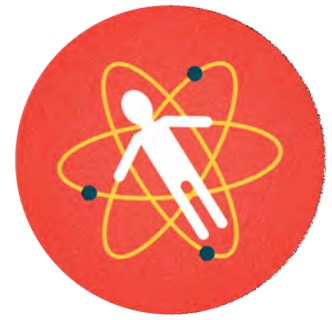
It started with Karl Schoenbach.

An electrical engineering professor and Eminent Scholar who joined the University in 1985 and retired in 2010, he was the center's first director, from 2002 to 2008. But he had been working in the field years before.

Schoenbach first focused on "pulsed power" for lasers and accelerators when he came to the United States in 1979. He shifted course after attending a conference in 1993 on its effect on living cells. "I thought, 'This is very exciting,'" he recalled.

His first project in that direction, funded by the federal government, employed high-speed pulses to disable barnacles attached to the pipes of water cooling systems on ships. Then came cancer.

Schoenbach joined forces with Stephen Beebe, a molecular biologist at Eastern Virginia Medical School who later moved to ODU. "He was as excited as I was," Schoenbach said.



## BIOELECTRICS by the numbers

# 76

Number of staff members

# \$6.5 million

Annual research funding

# \$5.5 million

Annual federal funding

# 64

Number of papers  
published in 2016-17



**KARL SCHOENBACH** helped pioneer bioelectrics research at ODU, serving as the center's first director.



**ANDREI PAKHOMOV**, the acting executive director, is researching the benefits for defibrillation.



**CHRISTIAN ZEMLIN** says using a bioelectrical method for heart ablation is "more exacting in killing tissue."



**STEPHEN BEEBE** left Eastern Virginia Medical School to pursue cancer research full time at the center.

**THE CENTER IS NAMED AFTER FRANK REIDY**, a retired engineer and energy executive and member of ODU's Board of Visitors, who shared Schoenbach's vision. "I'm Irish," Reidy said. "Our biggest problem is melanoma. I said, 'Let's work on melanoma.'"

Experiments in the late '90s showed that the rapid-fire electric pulses killed the melanoma cells. Those were followed by similarly encouraging tests on other forms, including liver cancer. Beebe now is studying the effect on breast cancer.

The cancer cells die in a genetically regulated process called apoptosis. Or, as Schoenbach put it: "The cancer gives up; it disassembles itself. It's a very orderly way to die."

Just as important, the treatment renders the system "immune to new cancer," Beebe said.

Schoenbach, who this year received the d'Arsonval Award, the world's top honor in the field of bioelectromagnetics, moved to Chapel Hill in May. But he still plans to visit his lab here every month or two.

"I told them, 'You won't get rid of me so easily,'" he said. "It's just too exciting to retreat into full retirement."

### Cardiac breakthroughs

The procedure known as ablation paradoxically destroys cardiac tissue to help stabilize an irregular heartbeat. It's often performed with a catheter, using intense heat.

For the past five years, Christian Zemlin, an associate professor of electrical and computer engineering, has racked up evidence that nano-pulses provide a safer, more efficient method of ablation.

"It's an extremely clean, fast and precise technique," lasting mere seconds, Zemlin said. "And it's more exacting in killing tissue. It generates uniform lesions. The width is persistent and predictable, even through thick tissue."

Most important, the procedure results in less frequent recurrence of arrhythmia than standard m

More recently, Zemlin and his colleagues have homed in on the potential use in defibrillation.

Zemlin co-wrote a paper with interim executive director Andrei Pakhomov, EVMS researcher Jonathan Philpott and three current or former ODU grad students that was published this year by the European Society of Cardiology. It concluded: "Nanosecond-defibrillation is a promising technology that may allow clinical defibrillation with profoundly reduced energies."

And that, Pakhomov said, could increase patients' survival rates after they undergo defibrillation.

The researchers say other possible benefits range from stimulating the production of bone marrow to eliminating cellulite.

"Our body is an electrical system," said Shu Xiao, an associate professor of electrical and computer engineering who has designed much of the center's equipment, including its main pulse generator. "A lot of these things have not been addressed yet."

Meanwhile, the Reidy center has begun using even quicker pico-second pulses, lasting one-trillionth of a second. Beebe is probing the "why" of the successful results and testing his theory that the pulses impair the ability of mitochondria in the cells to produce ATP, which helps transport energy.

And professors are exploring ways to administer pulses without electrodes, offering the potential to further reduce complications, Pakhomov said. "I look at that as the Star Trek stuff," Heller said. "You can do things without having contact."



### Coming soon to a hospital near you?

When will the breakthroughs at ODU's center be seen in doctors' offices and hospitals? Maybe within a couple of years, some researchers say.

Schoenbach, who's been at it for two decades, said: "You can write a scientific paper very quickly; to have a medical therapy in place takes a lot longer."

A crucial step – Food and Drug Administration trials – has yet to occur. Yet Pulse Biosciences' emergence as a commercial catalyst for bioelectric advances will expedite the process, Old Dominion professors said.

"They have the resources and motivation to quickly identify promising technology and support it so it comes into practice," Zemlin said.

Old Dominion's research has involved animals. Last year Pulse began its first tests using human patients, focusing on skin disease. And it expects its version of a pulse generator to be on the market by the end of 2018.

Even as Pulse pursues its own work, it is funding further research at ODU. "Every time they're here, they're praising Dr. Xiao for his designs," Zemlin said.

In his understated way, Schoenbach declared his hunch back in the '90s a winner: "It looks like we found something that can help people and not just produce good scientific papers."

### WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT OLD DOMINION

"They are the major player in the field, not only in biomedical applications, but in other aspects, as well." – Gregor Sersa, head of the department of experimental oncology at the Institute of Oncology Ljubljana in Slovenia.

"The Bioelectrics Center at Old Dominion is a world leader ... and has consistently performed cutting-edge research making a real difference for future cancer treatment. Convening in Norfolk for this world conference was well in line with the international reputation of the center." – Dr. Julie Gehl, professor of clinical oncology at the University of Copenhagen and chief physician at Zealand University Hospital in Denmark.

### THE NEXT GENERATION

Leaders at the Reidy center are grooming the next generation of bioelectric researchers. Ross Petrella, 26, is among them. He began doctoral studies in biomedical engineering at Old Dominion in 2014 not even knowing what bioelectrics was. Xiao, his adviser, introduced him to the field, and Petrella found "This was the thing I had been looking for all along."

Petrella helps Xiao develop systems that transmit pulsed power. He recently completed a three-month fellowship in Germany.

Two other young members of the center were recognized at the recent international conference in Norfolk: Maura Casciola won first place and Elena Gianulis won third in the biomedical engineering category of the Young Investigator Competition. Both are postdoctoral researchers in Pakhomov's lab.

Beyond ODU, Heller was encouraged that 90 participants at the conference – roughly a quarter – were young researchers. "The future is bright," he said.



## WHAT PULSE BIOSCIENCES THINKS

"Pulse Biosciences is grateful for its ongoing and highly collaborative relationship with Old Dominion's research community and is excited to bring this disruptive technology into the clinic for the benefit of patients and clinicians."

– Darrin Uecker,  
president and CEO



**RICHARD HELLER** said the realization of the researchers' dreams is "not a usual occurrence in science."





# Learning by HELPING REFUGEES

By Mary Architzel Westbrook (M.F.A. '10)

**W**hen President Trump announced a travel ban on seven predominantly Muslim countries in January, Felicia Fisher's first thought was: "This is going to hurt my friends."

Fisher was a few weeks into a service learning course, sponsored by ODU's Women's Studies Department, focused on learning about refugee communities, researching the complex issues they navigate

and helping them resettle in Hampton Roads.

For Fisher and her classmates, that meant coaching adults as they learned how to ask for change in a supermarket. Holding a woman's hand when she worried about loved ones and famine.



Delighting in tea in the apartment of a family that weeks before had lived scattered among friends or in a refugee camp. Teaching a child to swim confidently across a pool.

In the students' eyes, the experience transformed the refugees into mothers and fathers, daughters and sons — people — in need of something every person needs at some point: A second

chance. A little help.

"One thing I know is that the refugees have taught me more than I could ever teach them," said Fisher, who graduated in May with a degree in women's studies. "They're resilient. They're open. They want stability and happiness for their families. That's not asking for the world."

## Making the Connections

The course, titled Refugee Studies Research, originated with two questions: How might ODU students help refugees in Hampton Roads — and could that experience deepen their own education?

About five years ago, Jennifer Fish, professor and chair of women's studies, and lecturer Vaughan Frederick, who has since retired, began brainstorming ideas on partnering with Commonwealth Catholic Charities.

"I wanted my students to see all of the connections and integrations between what we're learning and researching in the classroom and actual policy," she said.

Commonwealth Catholic Charities helps about 250 refugees each year over a three-month resettlement period. Refugees come from countries such as Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Burundi. All are heavily vetted by the U.S. State Department.

ODU students play many roles, spending each Friday on-site, in addition to reading, research and class sessions.

They meet families at their homes and at the charity's Newport News headquarters; serve as teaching assistants for adults and children learning English; act as "cultural navigators"



assisting with job applications and doctors' appointments, and create research-based projects that explore the myriad complexities for people seeking refuge in the United States. Twelve students enrolled in the course in the spring and summer, and eight more took the course this fall. Fish expects to grow the partnership as a "long-term investment in cross-cultural peace-building."

For some students, the pull of the class was immediate.

Bnar Mustafa, a graduate student in humanities and women's studies, came to the United States from Iraq five years ago; her husband had earned a scholarship at Old Dominion to study civil engineering. Mustafa, a lawyer by training, learned English after moving to Virginia. She jumped at the chance to be part of the class.

"I know how important it is to help a homesick person," said Mustafa, who worked as a translator in the spring and gave birth to her first child, Helen, toward the end of the course. "When you hear stories directly from refugees, it's a totally different experience than reading about things in class. You want to do as much as you can."

Last summer, Kellyn Caldwell, a champion swimmer enrolled in ODU's Graduate Program in International Studies, led swim classes for 6- to 13-year-olds.

"There's a huge drive for drowning prevention in Hampton Roads, but a lot of socialization also happens around the water," she said. "Going to a birthday party or the beach, you want kids to be comfortable. They want to fit in."

Ruba Sammouna, a refugee from Syria, received help applying to community college. She said the students' dedication and enthusiasm made a difference.

"I know I can tell them when I need help," she explained. Plus, "just having people come to visit us changes how other people see us. This group has helped with a much larger understanding."

### 'Total Immersion'

Fish said the class helps students better understand global social, political and economic issues and relate to them on a deeply personal level, without leaving Hampton Roads.

"With this course, we can offer students a study abroad program locally," Fish explained. "It can feel like total immersion. As a group, we see the physical and emotional effects of what happens when a family must leave their home. We see people break down and cry. We spend a lot of time just being and reflecting."

Jazzmine Hess, who is majoring in women's studies and international studies, said the experience reshaped her worldview.

"I met families who had relatives going through chemical attacks," she said. "Suddenly, that's not just news 'over there.' It's an atrocity affecting all of us."

The course also gave Hess a sense of empowerment — and hope for the future.

"It taught me not to give in to frustration," she said. "No more, 'Well, that's just how things are.' Instead, it's 'What can I do about this?'"

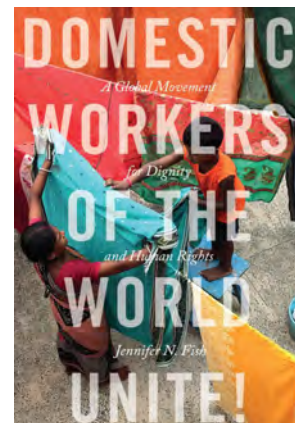
For Sammouna, "It just gives me the idea that there is someone there, someone different than you. Someone who is a connection to a new life."

*Mary Architzel Westbrook lives with her family in Norfolk. She earned her M.F.A. in creative writing from ODU in 2010.*



### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*Hear some of the students relate their experiences in videos created by the Women's Studies Department at [www.odu.edu/monarchmag/jennifer-fish](http://www.odu.edu/monarchmag/jennifer-fish)*



### ON DOMESTIC WORKERS

Jennifer Fish recently published her fourth book. "Domestic Workers of the World Unite!" chronicles the first international activist movement of domestic workers, many of whom are immigrants. It's at the University Village Bookstore at [www.odu.edu/bookstore](http://www.odu.edu/bookstore).

# His sea-level-rise research occurs far above water

By Brendan O'Hallarn (Ph.D. '16)

**A**s a researcher studying sea level rise, Ben Hamlington frequently communicates with colleagues around the world who take grand expeditions on boats in the middle of the ocean or at remote camps in the far Arctic. "It's funny; I have no interest in doing that," said Hamlington, an assistant professor of ocean, earth and atmospheric sciences at Old Dominion. "I'd rather be in front of my computer somewhere."

But even in his stationary position, Hamlington has set sail on an ambitious research agenda in sea level rise.

An aerospace engineer by training, Hamlington is analyzing the images taken from orbiting satellites to study historic changes in sea levels. New technology, combined with tidal gauge information that goes back decades, allows for precise results, he said.

"There are now altimeters that can measure the surface of the ocean within two to three centimeters of accuracy," he said.

Hamlington has participated in studies that have shown variations in previously reported rates of sea level rise in some locations. More recently, he has used the satellite imagery to measure subsidence – the gradual sinking of land mass.

A recent study with colleagues at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory challenged decades of conventional wisdom about the sinking of land in southeastern Virginia, a prime culprit in sea level rise in Hampton Roads.

The researchers discovered that land subsidence is occurring at substantially different levels in different parts of the region, a finding that could affect land use, flood maps and other regional

planning decisions.

Hamlington's collaboration with NASA will only accelerate.

He recently was appointed research lead of NASA's Sea Level Change team, a multidisciplinary effort founded in 2014 to analyze data to understand sea level changes, today and in the future.

Steve Nerem, a University of Colorado aerospace engineer who previously led the team, said Hamlington's expertise is especially valuable. "NASA is particularly interested in how satellite measurements can be used to better understand sea level change and improve regional projections of future change," Nerem said.

Hamlington said, "Pulling together these types of data (from NASA) to better estimate the 20th-century measure of sea level rise can help us determine the man-made effects of climate change, so we can separate that piece from the other noise."

By noise, Hamlington was referring to other factors affecting sea level changes. But he could as easily have been speaking about the political discussion around global warming. Hamlington didn't hesitate to speak his mind in an interview with National Public Radio earlier this year.

"The climate change problem's not going away," he said. "So there's a need for good science, whether or not the government's funding this research."

*Brendan O'Hallarn is a lecturer of public relations in Old Dominion's Department of Communication & Theatre Arts and a former PR specialist for the University. If given the choice, he'd prefer to do all of his interviews at Borjo Coffeehouse.*



"Ben Hamlington is an exceptional scientist who is positioned for a stellar career. He continues ODU's long tradition of excellence in the earth and oceanographic sciences."

- Morris Foster, vice president for research



PHOTO: CHUCK THOMAS



## He left Ethiopia; his heart didn't

By Philip Walzer

**W**hen Berhanu Mengistu was a little boy, his mother saved his life. Mengistu, the youngest of 13 children, was lying in bed, staring at the ceiling when the house – in Ethiopia's northern countryside – caught fire. His mother grabbed him and rushed out. As she left, the ceiling collapsed.

A sign in his office recalls an African proverb: "A good deed is something one returns." It's a message Mengistu has taken to heart in a big way.

His work has stretched across Africa, but he has repeatedly returned to Ethiopia, sometimes engaging with leaders of rival factions, to train the civil service, help launch the country's first doctoral program in public policy, and teach conflict resolution – one of his specialties – to judges.

He has contributed to projects ranging from building schools – he proudly laid the first brick for one – to digging wells so women wouldn't have to carry water on their backs as his mother did.

"I'm the one who's getting the gift," Mengistu said.

Mengistu was the only one of his siblings to leave Africa and attend college, "though most of my brothers were much smarter." He received his doctorate from the University of Delaware in

public policy.

A professor of public service in the Strome College of Business, Mengistu has taught at Old Dominion since 1985. He's received three Fulbright fellowships, to Ethiopia, South Africa and Ukraine.

Mengistu's escape from the fire wasn't his only close call in Ethiopia.

When he returned in 1976, he found that "you had to take sides. Either you were in support of the socialist program or you were part of the resistance. I could do neither. I concluded there was no place for me there."

Mengistu came back to the United States. The next day, the Ethiopian government declared that no one could leave the country.

"I was a lucky guy," he said. "Except for one, the government killed most of my buddies. I would have been one of the dead bodies."

Last year, as Mengistu planned a visit, he received an email from a contact that repeated the cryptic message "My dear professor." He took it – correctly, he found out later – as a signal to stay away. So he did. The area he had planned to visit was besieged by violence that summer.

Harvey White, a professor of public policy and administration at the University of Delaware, has collaborated with Mengistu on conferences every other year to address issues in Africa. "He is committed to give something back to his country," White said. "His passion for that work is unrelenting."

Even when Mengistu is obstructed by Ethiopia's political upheaval.

He had worked with the country's Supreme Court to set up a court-supervised mediation program to stem rampant corruption. But it was delayed indefinitely in 2016, when the government declared a state of emergency after more than 650 people were killed in political protests.

"It's very difficult, but giving up is not an option," Mengistu said. "I'm going to do everything I can as long as I'm alive."



*A younger Mengistu with childhood friend Adu Worku, who has helped finance projects in Ethiopia.*

# Peery wrangles words to perfection in new novel By Philip Walzer



PHOTO: KNOX GARVIN

Janet Peery's second novel and fourth work of fiction, "The Exact Nature of Our Wrongs," was published in September. Peery, a University Professor of creative writing, has been a National Book Award finalist and the recipient of the Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

Her new novel follows the rollicking relationships of the Campbell family – an imperious retired judge, his enduring wife and their five contentious children. Publishers Weekly called it "potent and memorable." Peery recently spoke about her painstaking writing process, her preference for short stories and her views on addiction.

**Q** It took you six years to write this book. Why so long?  
When I start something, it takes me a long while to get going. I have this habit of going back and wrangling sentences into good shape the first time through, but somehow the sentences help me find out what I'm trying to say.

**Q** This novel puts the fun back into dysfunctional. You portray two elderly parents with five children, all annoying but endearing. How did you pull that off?

**A** It comes from the belief that in the human character, everybody has some vice and some virtue. Most often the vice is the other side of the virtue. Let's take Clair-Bell. Her great virtue is she wants to help and do something nice. That's a laudable thing. The other side of it is, she wants credit for it. The same is true for Doro. She's trying to be good, but she looks down at others from her perches. Nobody's a hero.

**Q** In this book, love triumphs over almost all. Does that reflect your worldview?

**A** Yes. I talk hard and I bark hard, but ultimately I'm a softie. What I believe is most people are just trying to do the best they can.

**Q** You've set the novel in your native Kansas. Are you hoping this will help erase misconceptions about Kansas elsewhere in the country?

**A** Nothing can erase the misconceptions about Kansas. You hear, "Oh, I drove across Kansas once. It was so flat and boring." Sizing up a place based on stereotypes denigrates the experience of others who grew up there and love it.

**Q** Addiction – to drugs and other influences – is a strong theme. What does the novel add to this discussion?

**A** I wanted to show that there are many ways we can be addicted. Everybody gets a secondary gain out of something. I just read an interesting article that said the root cause of addictive behavior is the want of connection.

I don't know if I believe that. It's an unanswerable conundrum. Here we are in the middle of the opioid crisis, and so many factors in society bear responsibility.

**Q** You've said this will be your last novel. Why do you prefer writing short stories?

**A** They take less time. Everything is moving toward a simple, unified effect. What I like about a short story is that it's swift, it's streamlined, it's precise. If it can move the reader, that's the best of all.

Copies of "The Exact Nature of Our Wrongs" are available at ODU's University Village Bookstore, at [odu.bkstr.com](http://odu.bkstr.com)

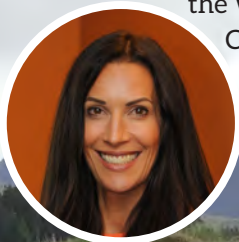


# Mobile learning: A lifeline to refugee students

*By Brendan O'Hallarn (Ph.D. '16)*

## More than a luxury

Old Dominion University's Helen Crompton is one of the world's experts in the use of mobile technologies – phones and tablets – in education, according to the United Nations. The practice has faced skepticism, particularly in the West, where technology has been treated as a luxury. But Crompton, assistant professor of teaching and learning, believes technology can help surmount many hurdles.



## Enhancing good teaching

Crompton's eyes light up when asked about the future. Mobile learning has already proved its worth in initiatives such as promoting literacy among Afghani women. But she stressed that it's not a cure-all. "These are tools. They cannot fix bad teaching, but they can greatly enhance good teaching."

## Why mobile learning?

Mobile technology can allow refugee populations – who may be trapped in the process for years – to still receive a substantial education. Without it, "we are at risk of losing an entire generation," Crompton said.



### Breaking through to students

Crompton taught children with emotional and behavioral disabilities in her native England. Digital technologies were one of the few ways she could connect with the students. "I used technology and made the lessons relevant when nothing else was breaking through," she said.

### Recognized by the UN

The United Nations has identified Crompton as one of nine mobile learning experts, and she serves as a consultant for two UN organizations – UNESCO and the International Telecommunication Union. Crompton gave the keynote address in November at the Lesbos Dialogues in Greece, a multidisciplinary effort to help refugees displaced from Syria.





## A leader in training nurse anesthetists *By Philip Walzer*

**O**ne of Old Dominion University's most successful programs operates far from the main campus, in the Virginia Beach Higher Education Center. The graduate program in nurse anesthesia teaches experienced nurses to administer anesthesia and monitor patients' responses and vital signs during surgery.

Graduates have a near-perfect record on the national certification exam, which they attribute to a demanding curriculum and laser-like attention from faculty members. That connection extends outside the classroom. The program's director, Nate Apatov, invites all students who are away from home to his house for Thanksgiving.

Old Dominion launched the program in 1995, and it moved to the Virginia Beach center in 2012. Here's more about it.

### WHAT STUDENTS SAY

Cheryl Rutherford '15 moved here from Oregon with her husband to attend the program. It didn't disappoint her: "I definitely got what I needed. The faculty are incredible. I could call any of them up any time I needed help." She works as a nurse anesthetist for Atlantic Anesthesia.

Tayoh Valdez, who will graduate in December, said faculty members are "genuinely invested in your success and getting out and being a good nurse anesthetist and providing safe care. The amount of clinical hours we're getting is a lot more than the minimum requirement" – about 700 cases, Apatov said, compared with the mandated 550.



**The median U.S. salary for nurse anesthetists is \$157,140, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.**



### CAN'T BEAT THOSE NUMBERS

Ninety-eight percent of ODU's students passed the CRNA national exam in the past four years, compared with an 86 percent national pass rate, Apatov said. All get jobs afterward; some get two or three offers.

### GETTING IN IS TOUGH

Applicants must have bachelor's degrees and experience in critical care nursing. Only 16 were admitted to this year's incoming class, which will be the first to complete a doctorate, requiring a full-time 3-year course of study.

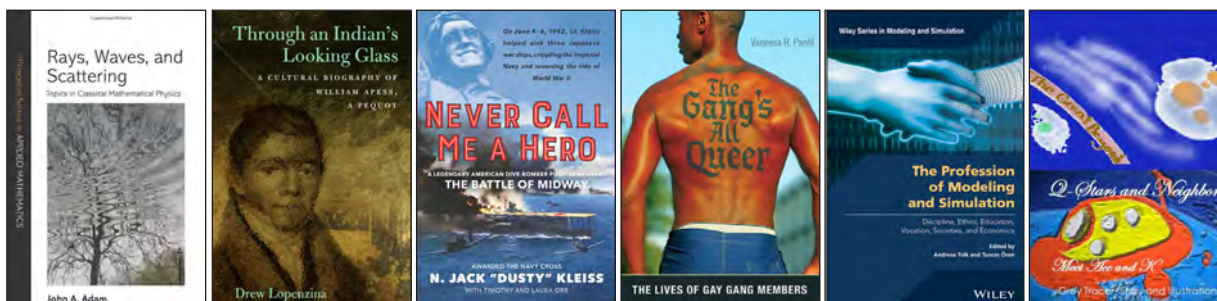
Why not enroll more? Old Dominion wants to make sure class size doesn't exceed job demand. Plus, Apatov said, "We only accept students who look, smell and taste like they will succeed."

### ALMOST LIKE THE REAL THING

Students train on a "high-fidelity" mannequin. "He literally comes to life," Apatov said. "He speaks; his eyes open up. When you give him medication he's allergic to, he swells up."

It's connected to a state-of-the-art anesthesia machine, which delivers oxygen and anesthetic gases and monitors vital signs. "They've done a very, very good job of replicating an operating room," Valdez said.





**Rays, Waves and Scattering: Topics in Classical Mathematical Physics, by John Adam (Princeton University Press).** The math professor shows how math concepts come into play in wave motion as well as phenomena such as rainbows and coronas.

**Through an Indian's Looking-Glass: A Cultural Biography of William Apess, Pequot, by Drew Lopezina (University of Massachusetts Press).** In this reprinted edition, Lopezina, an associate professor of English, recounts the life of William Apess, a 19th-century Pequot Indian and Methodist preacher, offering a window on such issues as slavery and Native American struggles for autonomy.

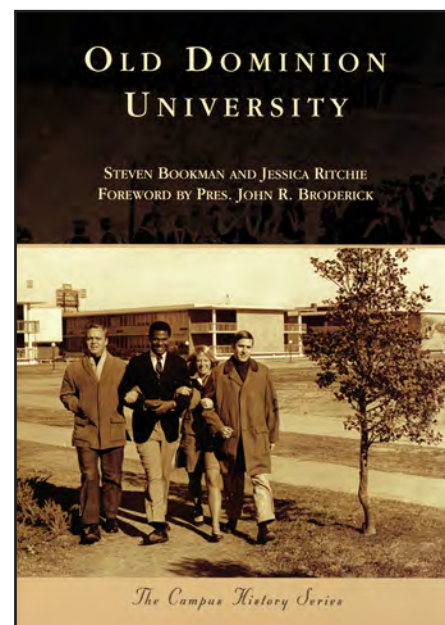
**Never Call Me a Hero: A Legendary Dive-Bomber Pilot Remembers the Battle of Midway, co-written by Timothy Orr (William Morrow).** The book chronicles N. Jack "Dusty" Kleiss' decisive role in the Pacific during World War II. It was written by Kleiss, who died last year at the age of 100; Orr, an associate professor of history, and his wife, Laura Orr, education director of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum.

**The Gang's All Queer: The Lives of Gay Gang Members, by Vanessa R. Panfil (NYU Press).** Panfil, an assistant professor of sociology and criminal justice, drew from interviews with more than 50 men in Columbus, Ohio, to open new insights into gay gangs and their members' motivations.

**The Profession of Modeling and Simulation: Discipline, Ethics, Education, Vocation, Societies, and Economics, co-edited by Andreas Tolk (Wiley).** Tolk, an adjunct professor of modeling, simulation and visualization engineering, brings together essays from experts in the field highlighting commercial and economic challenges, as well as major discoveries and ethical guidelines.

**Q Stars and Neighbors: Meet Ace and K, by Grey Tracer (alias Michael Holt).** The independently published book – an adventure/sci-fi novel – is the third children's book written by Holt, an academic skills director at Old Dominion.

*Most featured books are available at the University Village Bookstore on Monarch Way.*



A pictorial history book, released by Arcadia Publishing, features 200 photos, many never before seen, from Old Dominion University's 87-year history. The book, edited by Steven Bookman, the University archivist, and Jessica Ritchie, head of special collections and University archives, is divided into chapters on such topics as academics, diversity and the evolution of the campus. It costs \$21.99 and is available at the University Village Bookstore: <http://www.odu.bkstr.com/>



## Once homeless, Connor plans to run a shelter *By Philip Walzer*

**D**uring the four years of her childhood that Taliah Connor lived in homeless shelters in Richmond, she repeated to herself almost like a mantra: “I have to be better than the life I’m living now. My goal is to go to college.”

She did it. And she hasn’t forsaken her past.

Connor, a sophomore, volunteered last summer at Hilliard House, the last shelter she had lived in. Her goal after graduation: To run a similar shelter.

“If you need to be in a shelter, I want my shelter to be the one you should go to,” said Connor, who is 20. Hilliard House “was one of the places that built me, and I want to help build up other

people.”

Her mother, who suffered from drug issues and depression, moved to a shelter when Taliah (pronounced Tuh-LAY-uh) was 7. She decided to take me with her.”

Connor lived in four shelters. “At the beginning,” she said, “it was really hard,” with kids at school calling her “poor” and worse. “But I grew up fast.”

Other girls whined about not getting the latest style of shoes. “I understood at a young age that I couldn’t have every-

thing I wanted. It made me a stronger person. I can handle more.”

She left Hilliard House when she was 11. Connor remained a good student, heeding her mother’s advice: “Go to school.”

She chose Old Dominion, she said, because it’s like “VCU away from home” and provided enough scholarship money for her to attend.

“I like it here,” she said. “There are a lot of different cultures and people, and the environment is very accepting.”

Connor plans to double-major in business management and women’s studies, blending her career goal and academic passion. “I have seen inequality for women, and I want to be a part of that change. Even if I can’t change the world, I can change something in someone’s life.”

“Ms. Connor exudes confidence and compassion,” said Wendy Porter, an adjunct faculty member in women’s studies. “Her humble beginning has served as her passion for learning and leading by example.”

As a summer volunteer at Hilliard House, Connor helped answer phones, packed meals for the residents and talked to them about her experiences. “It made me feel good, and I hope it motivated them,” Connor said.

Her mother, who is better, still nags

her if she’s in danger of sliding in her classwork.

“If I slip up, she tells me, ‘You need to get back on track. This isn’t going to get you your shelter.’”

Connor said her life’s lesson is: “Things do get better as long as you set your mind to them getting better. You just

have to try. You can’t sit back and wait for stuff because it’ll never happen.”

*“I understood at a young age that I couldn’t have everything I wanted. It made me a stronger person. I can handle more.” - Taliah Connor*



## The youngest speaker ever – and the first woman!

**A**ndrea Brzoska has made Student Government Association history – twice. Elected Senate speaker in the spring, when she was an 18-year-old freshman, Brzoska is the youngest person – and the first female – to hold the position in Old Dominion’s history.

Last year, Brzoska was a member of the Senate and chair of its student life committee. When she heard no woman had ever served as speaker, “I knew I had to run,” recalled Brzoska, now 19.

She figures that women in the past may have shied away from the position because of its high-profile nature. “It’s easy to mess up in front of 50 people,” Brzoska said.

The speaker chairs legislative meetings, recruits guest speakers, oversees committees and shepherds legislation.

Her agenda this year includes changing the timing of traffic lights to provide longer walk times across Hampton Boulevard.

Brzoska, who’s from Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, is majoring in international business. “I want to go to law school after I graduate,” Brzoska said. “Politics may be after.”



**About 400 students volunteered last month to assemble kits for victims of sexual assault for the group Fear 2 Freedom.**

## MACE ADOPTS A NEW FORMAT

**S**ay goodbye to the Mace and Crown as a weekly newspaper and hello to the Mace as a quarterly magazine.

Julianna Wagner, a junior who is the editor and chief of the Mace, said the switch was made by the preceding editorial board because too many copies were left sitting in the racks. “They thought, what could we do to make people actually read this?” she said.

The Mace, the successor to The High Hat, had been published as a newspaper since its founding in 1961. It still posts news articles on its website, [www.odu.edu/maceandcrown](http://www.odu.edu/maceandcrown). But it now focuses

on features, Wagner said.

In the fall, the site included such articles as “Blow Me! The Glassblowers of Norfolk,” a tribute to rocker Tom Petty and a poem about monuments.

Contrary to rumor, the Mace has not given up print, Wagner said. It will publish four magazines a year, gathering new and previously posted articles. The second is planned for this month.

“I love the switchover to a magazine,” Wagner said. “It makes it a little bit more creative.” Expect more poems and short stories and maybe a sex column, she said.

## FRESHMEN FACTS

**A SNAPSHOT OF THE CLASS OF 2021**

More than **2,900** students, one of ODU’s largest classes

**53%** female

**75%** on campus

**87%** in-state

From **37** states and **55** countries



# PROGRAM IS A WIN-WIN

By Philip Walzer

**P**am Kirk '88 still keeps in touch with the mentor she's had since childhood.

"I thought, what if more young females had the opportunity and blessing to have a mentor in their life to help guide them through their education and career?" said Kirk, a member of Old Dominion's Board of Visitors who has worked as a marketing and real estate executive.

So in 2014, she and First Lady Kate Broderick created the Women's Initiative Network, or WIN, which pairs successful women with female students at Old Dominion.

As of early fall, the program had 20 mentors and 23 students, said Bo Ram Yi (Ph.D. '17), one of the original students, who now manages the program.

The mentors' help extends far beyond academics. Broderick recalled lending a student a briefcase for an interview and offering

another a letter of recommendation for a job. "You meet them where they are," she said.

Each mentor and student meet regularly. In addition, the program holds group sessions two to three times a semester on topics such as personal finance and career planning.

"We have a lot of first-generation college students who may not have anyone in their lives to help with that sort of thing," Broderick said.

Each mentor is expected to donate \$4,200 annually, and the program awards one or two scholarships to participating students every year.

Broderick has high expectations for the future graduates.

"Twenty years from now, I would like to see one of our mentees make it not just to a seat on a board, but to the No. 2 or No. 1 spot," she said. "We need to have more women there."

**Here are the stories of two pairs of mentors and students:**

**MICHELLE GRAHAM**, a senior studying computer science, was having trouble with a class early in her Old Dominion University career. She felt sheepish about saying anything.

Her mentor, **SARAH GOLDEN '94**, president and chief administrative officer of The GBS Group, an engineering firm in Virginia Beach, encouraged her to speak up.

"She told me not to be afraid to ask questions of the professors – it's their job to help me – and to take advantage of the

resources on campus," Graham said. "She made me feel more confident."

This is the third year Golden and Graham have worked together. They meet for breakfast or dinner off-campus every couple of weeks.

Golden's guidance runs a wide spectrum. Once, she provided Graham fashion tips before a job interview: Wear something nice, but not too elegant. Keep the makeup light. Avoid very high heels.

Golden also helped Graham land an internship with her firm over the summer. "I learned a lot," Graham said. "She's a very strong leader, and she's also very inclusive." The experience also persuaded Graham to specialize in information technology after she graduates.

Golden, who also mentors sophomore Dasha Dillard, said: "I think of them both almost as daughters. My relationship with these two young women makes my life bigger and richer."

**PAM KIRK** began mentoring **BO RAM YI** in 2014. The relationship continued after Yi received her doctorate in international studies this year.

"I think of Pam as my role model," said Yi, now coordinator for student success and outreach initiatives for Student Engagement and Enrollment Services at ODU. "I love how Pam carries herself – how she speaks and dresses and interacts with people. She encourages me to always do better."

As Yi has advanced, their discussion topics have broadened to include work/life balance, dating and salary negotiations.

After one of their lunches, Yi met such luminaries as former U.S. Treasury Secretary John Snow and former U.S. Sen. George Allen, board members at Armada Hoffer Properties, where Kirk's husband is vice chairman.

Yi later asked Kirk if she had acquitted herself well. Definitely, Kirk said. Should she send them thank-you notes? A good idea, Kirk said.





# FOR FEMALE MENTORS, STUDENTS



For more information on the Bridge the Gap initiative, go to [www.odu.edu/win](http://www.odu.edu/win). To view the Women's Initiative Network Jewelry Collection, contact Renee Balzer at Long Jewelers at [rbalzer@longjewelers.net](mailto:rbalzer@longjewelers.net) or 757-498-1186.



"Bo has wonderful insight. She's always thinking: 'What do I need to do to get to the next level?'"

"And Pam helps me get to that point," Yi added.

Kirk, Yi said, "helped me become more comfortable in different settings. And she taught me there are always two sides to every story."

"What I reap," Kirk said, "is the unique opportunity to get to know a wonderful young woman coming into her own."

The Women's Initiative Network recently launched the Bridge the Gap initiative to help more students. WIN also just introduced a line of Monarch jewelry to benefit the initiative. The goal of Bridge the Gap - part of the University's new \$200 million fundraising initiative - is to help needy students, both men and women, with targeted expenses. "Some of our students are one crisis away from leaving school," Kate Broderick said. "It could be anything from illness to unemployment to a family emergency." The Bridge the Gap fund - announced by President John R. Broderick at his State of the University address - also will help students maximize extracurricular experiences, such as helping pay for summer housing for internships. Proceeds of the new Women's Initiative Network Jewelry Collection will go to the fund. The collection features men's and women's items, including cuff links, earrings and necklaces, all with a sterling silver Monarch lion (with zircon eyes!). The prices range from \$120 to \$230.



PHOTOS: CHUCK THOMAS



**\$765  
MILLION**

*The total amount of public and private funds raised by Old Dominion since John R. Broderick became president in 2008.*



## Old Dominion kicks off \$200 million fundraising effort

Old Dominion University has launched a \$200 million fundraising initiative, the largest in the University's history. The initiative, which will occur during the next several years, focuses on scholarships, student success, enhancement of teaching and research, and athletics.

ODU President John R. Broderick announced the initiative during his State of the University address in August. "We must embrace a greater challenge in fundraising," he told a record crowd of more than 1,500 at the Ted Constant Convocation Center. "We need to have more support to ensure that the best and brightest choose Old Dominion."

In addition to scholarships, the funds will allow students to take advantage of life-changing opportunities. "We want to ensure deserving students who qualify for an internship or a study abroad can say yes rather than 'No, I can't afford to go,'" Broderick said.

"I've emphasized today the many ways we've helped our students build their lives and their future, benefiting the surrounding community. Imagine how much more they'll be able to accomplish if we're successful."

*For more information on the athletic portion of the fundraising initiative, see Wood Selig's column on Page 49.*

## \$4.6 MILLION AWARD FUNDS 'GENETIC TIME TRAVEL'

Kent Carpenter, a professor of biological sciences profiled in the September issue of *Monarch Extra*, has won a \$4.6 million award from the National Science Foundation to undertake what he describes as "genetic time travel."

Carpenter will examine the DNA of Philippine fish specimens from 1907 to 1909 that are now housed at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. He will travel to the Philippines to collect the same species of fish and compare the genetic results. The work, to be undertaken over the next five years, will include ODU students.

"This will help us understand the impacts that we had on these valuable resources over many years of intense exploitation and habitat degradation," said Carpenter.

The \$4.6 million award is from the NSF's Partnerships for International Research and Education, or PIRE, program. He is among a relatively small number of scientists who have received two PIRE awards.

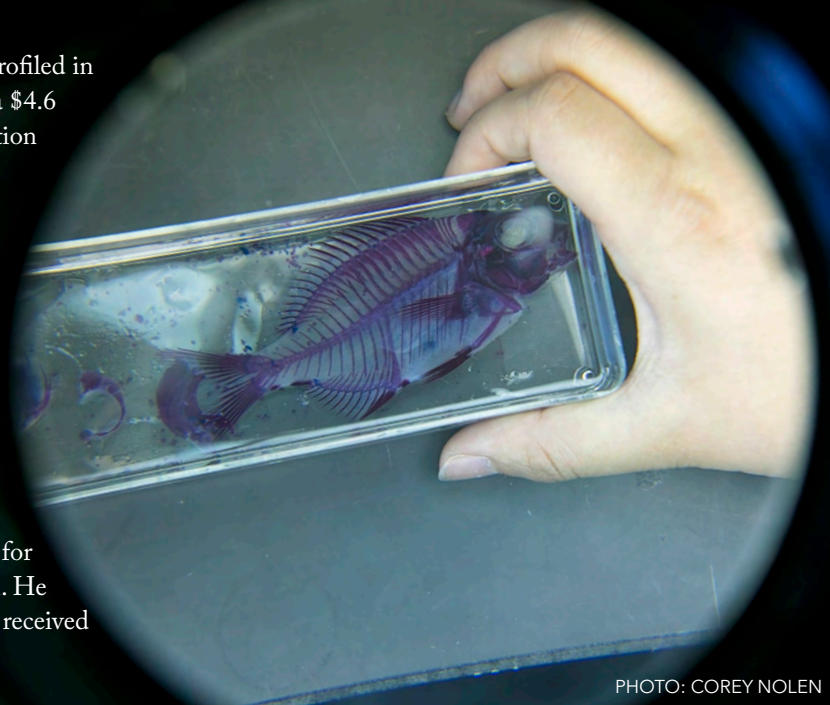


PHOTO: COREY NOLEN



PHOTO: COREY NOLEN



## A PLACE FOR ENTREPRENEURS TO SHOW THEIR STUFF

**H**andmade fidget spinners. Oh-so-soft Turkish towels. And candles with scents including blueberry cobbler and hazelnut coffee.

The products in a new store on Monarch Way cover a wide spectrum. But they have one thing in common: All are from businesses run by Old Dominion University students, alumni, faculty or staff members.

The shop is called THE Monarch Way – not just to denote its address, but also to convey the Monarch spirit that drives the young entrepreneurs.

It may be the only store in the United States that sells products created by univer-

sity students and also is run by students – members of Enactus, ODU's social entrepreneurship organization.

The store, at 4306 Monarch Way, features the products of more than 14 entrepreneurs. "I know they're good because I've tried many of them myself," President John R. Broderick said at the grand opening.

Hamilton Perkins '08 displays his line of sustainable tote bags and backpacks. The in-store experience "gives us great insight into customer behavior, things you wouldn't be able to find out online through Google Analytics," Perkins said.

### Briefs

Guess who visited Old Dominion's Peninsula Center over the summer? Former astronaut **BUZZ ALDRIN**. Aldrin, the second person to walk on the moon, spoke to students in the Virginia Aerospace Science and Technology Scholars program.

**CAROL CONSIDINE**, an associate professor of engineering technology, was interviewed on National Public Radio in September about the infrastructure challenges posed by severe storms and sea level rise.

**SILVANA WATSON**, associate professor of communication disorders and special education, is leading a team of ODU researchers that won a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to prepare teachers to better educate English-as-a-second-language students.

### Kudos!

#### **PRESIDENT JOHN R. BRODERICK**

received the Trailblazer Award from Men for Hope, an organization that supports males and "single women parenting young men." The organization was founded by NBA referee Tony Brothers '86 (profiled in the summer 2016 issue).

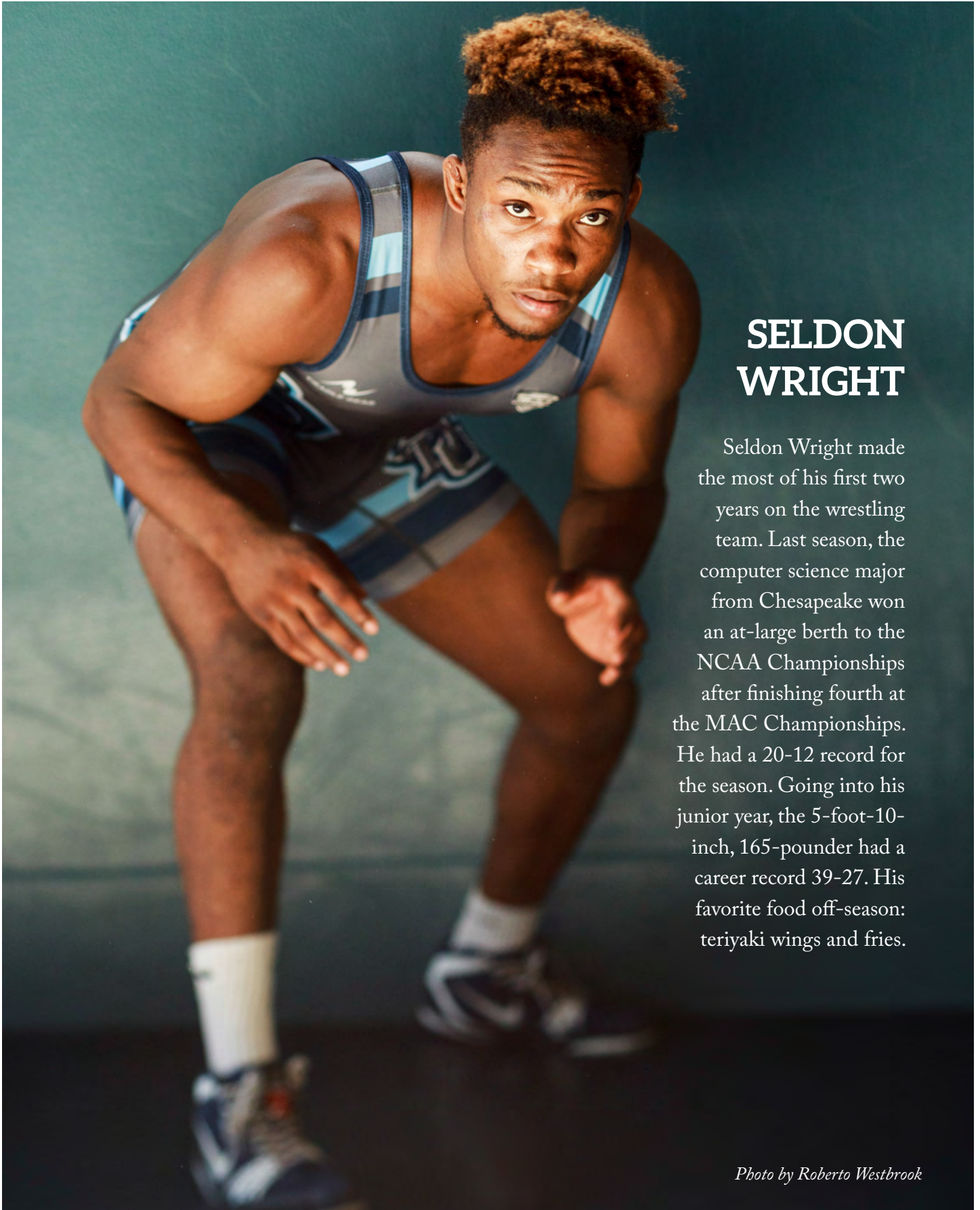
#### **JOHNNY YOUNG**, associate vice president in the Student Engagement and Enrollment Services division, won the 2017

Minority Access National Role Model Award. Young last year launched a chapter of Brother 2 Brother, which mentors male minority students.

**"CHEF BOB" PATTON**, the university's executive chef, received the American Culinary Federation Presidential Medal. "One of my primary responsibilities is to help make every member of our team more successful," Patton said.

# arts@ODU

For more information on programming in these venues, visit [ODUArtsTix.com](http://ODUArtsTix.com) or call (757) 683-5305.



## SELDON WRIGHT

Seldon Wright made the most of his first two years on the wrestling team. Last season, the computer science major from Chesapeake won an at-large berth to the NCAA Championships after finishing fourth at the MAC Championships. He had a 20-12 record for the season. Going into his junior year, the 5-foot-10-inch, 165-pounder had a career record 39-27. His favorite food off-season: teriyaki wings and fries.

*Photo by Roberto Westbrook*



# A basketball trio's final season together at ODU

By Philip Walzer

**A** Stith in time has saved more than one game for the men's basketball team. Three Stiths? Well, they can change a season.

But this will be the last season that the fearsome trio – brothers Brandon and B.J. on the court, father Bryant on the sidelines – will team up. Brandon, who received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice last year, will get his master's in sport management in the spring.

Dad got here first. Bryant Stith was hired as an assistant coach by his lifelong mentor, Jeff Jones, in 2013.

Then came the brothers' fast break. Brandon, a power forward, transferred from East Carolina University in 2014 to play for his father. B.J., a guard, followed in 2015 from U.Va., where Bryant holds the all-time scoring record.

They played under their father for three years at Brunswick High School in Lawrenceville, where they won three state championships. Going their separate ways “allowed them to see that they are stronger when they're together,” Bryant said.

Brandon and B.J., just 13 months apart, “were basically raised as twins,” said mom Barbara '92. They're best friends and roomies, each helping the other shore up weaknesses. But their personalities – and playing styles – are nothing alike.

“I always have to speak my mind and stand up for myself,” B.J. said. His bigger mouth sometimes misleads people into thinking he's the older one.

“I'm more to myself,” Brandon said. Or

as their father put it: “B.J. allows people to come into his world a lot more easily. Brandon exercises a lot more restraint.”

And on the court?

B.J. on Brandon: “I've never come across a person who plays as physically hard as him. He's a big player with high motivation.”

Brandon on B.J.: “He's the finesse guy and a prolific scorer. He's more skilled. I work harder. We balance each other out.”

Off the court, both won academic recognition: Brandon was named to the National Association of Basketball Coaches Honors Court. B.J., due to get his second bachelor's degree in 2019, made the Conference-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll.

Bryant Stith played for the NBA for 10 years, eight with the Denver Nuggets. At the end, “I lost the love of the game.” When he began coaching at Brunswick, “the kids gave it back to me.”

But he acknowledged that, at first, “I didn't know how to separate being a coach and a father. I used to grill them 24/7.” Barbara stepped in as the referee at home.

“He's a lot more patient now,” Brandon said. “He'll walk you through it if you make a mistake.” Before, he said, his father's style was “aggressive correction.”

Jones recruited Bryant, then a teenager from Brunswick, when he coached at U.Va. About 25 years later, he brought both generations of Stiths to ODU.

“Coach Jones provided a platform to allow this to happen,” Bryant said. “Most college coaches might have been intimidated by this dynamic, but he's confident in who he is. Maybe he understands us more than anyone else.”

*From left: B.J., Brandon and Bryant Stith and (below) with Barbara '92.*



PHOTOS: ROBERTO WESTBROOK

# McCray-Penson's goal: 'Compete to the end'

By Tim Wentz

*Nikki McCray-Penson plans to continue her legacy of success as Old Dominion University's seventh head women's basketball coach. A two-time All-American at South Carolina and three-time All-Star in the WNBA, she was assistant coach last year for South Carolina, which won the national championship. She sat down before the season to talk about her hopes for ODU, on and off the court.*



PHOTO: CHUCK THOMAS

**Q** Why did you leave a national championship program to come to Old Dominion?

**A** I've always had aspirations of being a head coach. ODU was the perfect fit for me, because of the people, the rich tradition and its great location for recruiting. But the biggest thing was the people. I had to feel connected to the people and that's what I felt when I came on my interview.

**Q** What did you learn from playing for or coaching with legends, such as Pat Summitt at Tennessee and Dawn Staley at South Carolina?

**A** The thing I take from both of them is uplifting our players to be champions on and off the floor. Pat would always say you never get a second chance to make a good first impression. For me, that's in the classroom, in the community and on the court. Dawn would always say the disciplined player can do anything. We want to be disciplined in everything that we do.

**Q** How will the style of play change for ODU women's basketball?

**A** I'm a hit-first type of coach. That's how I was as a player, so we're going to put the pressure on people offensively. We're going to dictate how we want them to play defensively. You're going to see a unit of high-character kids who are very disciplined and will compete to the very end.

**Q** What is the thing that would surprise most people to know about you?

**A** Probably being a breast cancer survivor. Most people don't know that if they meet me for the first time, but that's something that I battle every single day.

**Q** How has that experience changed you as a coach and a person?

**A** It's just making every day count. That's one of my biggest sayings. Count your blessings. Make every day count. I pride myself on being a good person and being a woman of faith. I always hold on to those things. Before, sometimes you take those days for granted. I don't anymore.

**Q** What do you like most about Old Dominion and Hampton Roads so far?

**A** I love the location. It's beautiful. I think it is a great place to raise a family. Everybody has been so supportive in helping me in my transition. From a recruiting standpoint, we have been able to visit all of the seven cities. So, just seeing the different flavors that Hampton Roads brings, it is a great place. The community is invested, and they love their ODU athletics.

*Tim Wentz is an assistant athletic director for communications.*



## From Athletic Director Wood Selig

Fundraising initiative off to a strong start

**TAKE A QUICK LOOK** around campus and you'll see tangible results of the private fundraising efforts put forth by the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation. The men's and women's basketball programs are spending their first seasons inside the \$8.5 million Bernett and Blanche Mitchum Basketball Performance Center.

This project will have a major impact on both our current student-athletes and future recruits, and it was made possible via dozens of private gifts.

This spring Old Dominion baseball fans will enjoy numerous upgrades to the Bud Metheny Baseball Complex highlighted by the privately funded \$400,000 rally alley project. It will provide the perfect setting to relax, socialize and watch Monarch baseball. A new all-digital scoreboard will keep fans informed and entertained. These upgrades will greatly enhance the game day experience. Head Baseball Coach Chris Finwood said, "We are all so excited about our new rally alley fan area! We believe this will help improve the game day atmosphere for all of our fans and help us create an environment ODU students will enjoy as well."

The 2017-18 academic year has marked



the start of a \$200 million University-wide fundraising initiative, \$40 million of which will go toward athletics. Half of that will go for athletic scholarship support and the other \$20 million toward construction of a new football stadium and other

athletic facility projects.

The initiative is off to a great start. In the first six months of 2017, more than \$10 million was raised toward the \$40 million goal. To find out how you can join the drive and support our student-athletes and ODU athletics, contact Jena Virga at the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation ([jvirga@odu.edu](mailto:jvirga@odu.edu)).

Speaking of the football stadium, we have selected Populous Architects, a leading intercollegiate sports architectural firm, for the stadium rebuilding project, which is scheduled to be finished in time for the 2019 football season.

Here's to a successful completion of our winter sports seasons, and best of luck to our spring sports as they prepare for their competitions. We hope to see you at some of our athletic contests and appreciate your support.

## UPDATES

When **RICK LOVATO '15** was profiled in the spring 2017 issue of Monarch magazine, he had just finished the season subbing for the injured Jon Dorenbos as long snapper for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Dorenbos was traded over the summer, and Lovato began the fall as the Eagles' long snapper. In late September, he snapped the ball to place kicker Jake Elliott for a team record-setting and game-winning 61-yard field goal.

### THOMAS DEMARCO '10 (M.B.A. '12),

the quarterback who ushered in the modern football era at Old Dominion, has returned to the University as athletic development officer for the Old Dominion Athletic Foundation. He will solicit private funding for the new football stadium, scholarships and other athletic needs. He played for four years in the Canadian Football League and also worked in real estate and mortgage lending.

Star shortstop **ZACH RUTHERFORD** (profiled in spring 2017) was a sixth-round pick of the Tampa Bay Rays in the 2017 Major League Baseball draft. He hit .266 over the summer for the Princeton Rays in the Appalachian League.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HOUSTON ASTROS

## JUSTIN TIME FOR THE ASTROS!

Former Monarchs ace Justin Verlander finally got it - a World Series ring. Verlander, acquired by the Astros on Aug. 31, helped propel Houston to the series with five straight wins during the season and a stingy 1.06 ERA. He added four more victories in postseason play. His only loss with the Astros was in the second game he pitched in the series. But even in that one, he gave up only two runs and three hits in six innings, struck out nine and walked no one. And the Saturday after the series, he married model Kate Upton. Not a bad two months at all.

## From the Alumni Association President

By Janet Molinaro (M.A. '14)

I am extremely excited and honored to be the new president of the Old Dominion University Alumni Association. This is an amazing time for the university, and as alumni, we should feel incredibly proud to be Monarchs.

I encourage alumni to become more engaged with the university. Visit our beautiful campus; attend an event, whether it is athletic, academic or social, and stay connected by keeping your contact information current with the Office of Alumni Relations.

Through our ODU experiences, we are bonded in a unique way. We have great memories of our alma mater, including relationships we made with roommates, friends, staff and professors. Many of us continue these relationships through



active participation with the ODU Alumni Association, where we are 140,000 members strong.

Together, we have an outstanding network of Monarch excellence.

Staying involved with the university is a rewarding experience beyond measure. Join a chapter or an affinity group, participate in a networking opportunity, travel with our association or volunteer your service on campus. The association provides alumni with programming and events that help advance our core mission: to foster the pride of Old Dominion University alumni and support the University's future through alumni engagement, programs and scholarships.

One of our association's greatest assets is the inclusivity and diversity of our collective backgrounds and experiences. Along with myself, several Monarchs volunteer their time and talent on the Alumni Association Board of Directors. They are: Kelvin Arthur '85, Joyce Burns '85, Alexis Borum '14, Shannon Butler '05, John Costulis '85 (M.E.M. '91), Molly Dey '89, John Duy '92 (M.B.A. '99), April Elizee '13, Stephanie Fowler '95, Eileen Gwaltney '99, Jennifer Keenan '88, Mike Lee '93, Patty Lott '87, Louis Martinette '75, Brian Obal '95, Curtis Parker '90, Rachel Perry '07, Scott Price '11, Jim Raimondo '89, Terry Rivenbark '74, Margaret Roomsburg '81, Chris Stuart '93 (M.A. '94), Margaret Thompson '00, Janet Webster '95 and André Wells '07 (M.P.A. '13).

The Alumni Association belongs to all of us, and we encourage you to engage, connect and give back to your alma mater. Visit [odualumni.org](http://odualumni.org) for more information.

*Dawn Provost '92 (M.B.A. '98)*

### 1970s

**Carlton Bennett '72** was elected rector of the Old Dominion University Board of Visitors in September 2016, two years into his first term. He is a partner with Bennett and Sharp LLC, a law firm based in Virginia Beach.

**J. Morgan Davis '72**, president and chief banking officer for TowneBank since 2011, was ranked No. 3 on the 2017 Inside Business "Power List" of influential people in Hampton Roads. Davis says he battles bureaucracy every day to help people realize their dreams. "Doors are closed to so many. ... I am happy to hold those doors open, stand to the side, bow, tip my hat, and say 'Welcome,'" he said.

**Robert Bowen '75** started his career in aviation from the ground up. From fueling airplanes and loading cargo for Piedmont, Bowen eventually began using his business degree working a front-office job for Norfolk International Airport. Last year, Bowen was promoted from deputy to executive director of the airport authority. Can we say "the sky's the limit"?

**Tom Davey (M.B.A. '76)**, a professional engineer, joined Dewberry earlier this year as a senior project manager for the firm's electrical engineering division in Raleigh, N.C. He has more than 40 years' experience designing and managing electrical engineering and power generation projects.



### 1980s

**Ken Maddrey '84** has been named vice president of collections and fraud, a senior leadership position, at Chartway Federal Credit Union. He has worked for Chartway since 1999.

**Janet Conrad Moore '86** has joined S.L. Nusbaum Realty Co. as vice president, retail brokerage and development, and will concentrate her efforts on the Hampton Roads and Richmond markets. Moore has worked more than 20 years in commercial real estate.

**Linda McCormack-Miller (M.S. '89)** has been named senior vice president/chief nursing



officer for the Mohawk Valley Health System in Utica, N.Y. A former U.S. Navy officer and nurse, McCormack-Miller earned her doctorate in nursing from Rush University in Chicago.

**Ting Xu '88 (M.S. '89)**, co-founder, chairwoman and former president of Evergreen Enterprises Inc., and her husband, **Frank Qiu (M.E. '89)**, CEO of Evergreen, were inducted into the Greater Richmond Business Hall of Fame in May. The Richmond-based home décor company that they began in 1993 has since acquired the Plow & Hearth, VivaTerra and Children's Wear Digest Inc. companies.

**Sharon Pratt Lapkin '89**, administrative director and senior risk manager at Bon Secours Health System Inc., based in Marriottsville, Md., has been selected to join the Nursing Board at the American Health Council. Lapkin specializes in risk management, insurance, regulatory compliance, patient care and safety, and medical staff services. The Catholic health system operates in six states, primarily on the East Coast.

## 1990s

**Andrew E. Beck '90 (M.S. '92)**, director of research development at CommScope, was recognized in February in the company's first class of Innovators in Action for creativity and innovations within the wired and wireless industries served by the global company.

**Darron W. Cross '93** received the Alumni Award from the Grand Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity for "exceptional service and meritorious contributions" to the fraternity. He was honored at a February ODU basketball game.

**Chris Petersen '93 (M.S. '95)**, a senior natural resources specialist at Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic, fell into a job 14 years ago that serves his country and protects the reptiles and amphibians he loves. Petersen is responsible for conservation and management of reptiles on local military bases, so reptiles can co-exist with military training needs, without harm to either group. Petersen also produces a photo library and safety videos to educate troops that might encounter dangerous reptiles.

**Holli Floyd '94 (M.S. Ed. '95)**, a pre-algebra teacher for 21 years at Indian River Middle

## Celebrating 50 years of wedded – and ODU – bliss

**Marjorie Kidd '73** just celebrated her 50th wedding anniversary with her husband, Robert. But this year marked an equally important milestone: the 50th anniversary of the family's tightly woven connections with Old Dominion University, which involve degrees, jobs and even matchmaking.

Here's the rundown:

Marjorie enrolled at what was then Old Dominion College in 1967 when her husband, Robert, was deployed to Vietnam. She tried living in Gresham Hall, "but I quickly found out that a married woman doesn't belong in the dorms."

Kidd received her bachelor's degree in Spanish. She taught for 17 years in Norfolk Public Schools and from 1987 to 1989 was assistant director of international programs at Old Dominion. After Robert retired as a warrant officer from the Navy, he worked from 1989 to 2005 as lab instrument supervisor for ODU's Department of Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.

Now the second generation: Their older son, Robbie, received his bachelor's in education from Old Dominion in 1997. He married Susan Larson, then an assistant professor of special education, and they moved to Duluth, Minn.

The second son, David, has three degrees from ODU: A bachelor's in English in 1996, a master's in education in 2002 and a master's in applied linguistics in 2008. He also was an adjunct instructor in English from 2009 to 2013.

Oh, and David also found his wife at ODU. Susan mentioned to Jennifer Kemp, then a master's student in education: "You should meet Robbie's little brother, David." Three years later, in 2001, they married. Jennifer Kidd, who also received her doctorate in urban services from ODU, is now a senior lecturer in teaching and learning. David is an IT analyst at a law firm.

They have three children: Donovan, 15; Miranda, 11, and Jonah, 9. Marjorie Kidd is betting they'll continue the ODU legacy: "Out of three, one of them is bound to want to go there. The odds are good."

– Philip Walzer



## From field hockey goalie to up-and-coming lawyer

**Mary Cate Gordon '06** juggled field hockey and nearly two majors at Old Dominion University. That experience, along with the academic rigor at ODU, provided solid grounding for her future.

“ODU’s political science program prepared me exceedingly well for law school,” Gordon, 32, said. “I took substantive classes in constitutional law and the First Amendment, which put me pretty far ahead of the curve at Temple University.”

Gordon is an employment lawyer in New Jersey and Philadelphia for the firm Ballard Spahr LLP. This year she was named “a New Leader of the Bar” by the New Jersey Law Journal. The designation recognizes attorneys under 40 who represent “the future of the legal profession in New Jersey.”

At ODU, Gordon won the Kaufman Award and earned a 4.0 average. She majored in English and had almost enough credits for a second major in political science. Gordon also played goalie for the field hockey team and was named an academic All-American.



Gordon chose employment law because “you’re dealing with relationships between employers and employees, between unions and employers. There are real people at the heart of these things.”

Gordon also does pro bono work, representing transgender people who are legally changing their names, as well as the USA women’s hockey team in its contract negotiations.

“It was really very rewarding to work with those athletes,” she said. “They were not being compensated for their work at that level.”

Still a juggler, she’s also a mom – her son, Henry, was born in April – and a part-time professor. Gordon recently won the Outstanding Adjunct Teaching Award at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia.

– Philip Walzer



## ALUMNI AUTHORS

**Lenore Hart (M.F.A. '00)** has published “Wednesdays with Frank: A Panegyric” (Cypress, 2017), her ninth book. Hart and co-authors David Poyer and Steve Berry pay tribute to F. Armstrong Green, their mentor at The Bard Society, a weekly workshop for working writers that has endured for more than 50 years. Hart adds that she is eager to reconnect with fellow MFAs and hear their experiences in the literary world. Find her on Facebook, @LenoreHartAuthor.

**Robert Carlos Sr. '08** has written “Poems in the Sea of Life,” verses inspired by books in the Bible, and published by Christian Faith Publisher Inc. Carlos is a retired Air Force master sergeant, police lieutenant, and teacher of children with special needs. He lives in Hampton with his wife of 45 years, Rosa. He attends Ebenezer Baptist Church, where he is a Sunday school leader and head of the jail ministry.

**Hannah Kimberley (Ph.D. '12)** chronicles a female pioneer among mountain climbers in her recent book, “A Woman’s Place Is at the Top: A Biography of Annie Smith Peck, Queen of the Climbers,” published by St. Martin’s. Peck was the third woman reported to have climbed the Matterhorn and the first of either gender to scale Mount Huascarán in Peru. She also once walked into the White House to see Teddy Roosevelt without an invitation.

School in Chesapeake, inspired eighth-grader Alexis Davis to write an essay for the Barnes & Noble “My Favorite Teacher” contest. Both teacher and essay were honored in April. In addition to math classes, Floyd supports student success by teaching college readiness skills in Chesapeake’s AVID elective program.

**Tonya Harrell '94 (M.S. Ed. '11)** has been promoted to director of catering for the Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront. She previously was service director at Norfolk’s Town Point Club and catering sales manager at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hilton, and is active in the Hampton



Roads Chamber of Commerce.

## 2000s

**Stephanie Clair '02** "drew her way through cold winter days" in upstate New York, attended ODU and eventually settled in sunny San Diego. Her art reflects her mission to engage people in a "3D world of people, passion and beauty" depicted in bold acrylic scenes taken from her dreams. Find her on Facebook @clairfneart.

**Michael Barnum '05** now works for Bankers Insurance LLC, one of the 100 largest agencies in the country. He focuses on risk management and insurance programs for businesses with more than 20 employees.

**Chelsea Edward '06** recently was named chair of life sciences at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College in Salisbury, N.C. Edward received

a bachelor's in sociology at ODU, a master's in biology at Virginia State University and a doctorate of public health in epidemiology from Capella University.

An early decision by **Amanda Dawson Pontifex '06 (M.S. Ed. '07)** to change careers from nursing to education was validated on May 5 when the fifth-grade teacher at Shelton Park Elementary School was selected as 2018 Citywide Teacher of the Year for Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Congratulations!

**Alex Harwell '07** has been promoted to associate in the Raleigh, N.C., office of Dewberry, a professional services firm. Harwell specializes in building and utility systems engineering.

**Ian Kalin (M.E.M. '07)** joined eHealth Inc. as chief data officer in May. Kalin was the first chief

data officer for the U.S. Department of Commerce, a Google consultant and proponent of open data to spur startups and entrepreneurial projects. eHealth operates eHealth.com, the nation's first and largest private online health insurance exchange.

**Robin Massey-Kirk '07** of Indian Land, S.C., was named South Carolina Woman of the Year 2017 by the South Carolina chapter of the NAACP. To win the friendly competition, she raised the greatest amount of funds, \$10,778, to support the NAACP's work. Massey-Kirk is a pre-K-to-4 teacher in Lancaster County.

**Jeremy Bustin '09** was hired as public relations and communication manager for General Electric's Charlottesville Brilliant Factory in March after nearly six years in the communication department at Newport News Shipbuilding.

## Behind the class note

**Arielle Villanueva '13 (M.Ed. '15)** reports that she and her husband, **Stephen '12**, are adjusting to **post-Monarch life** in Durham, N.C. "We loved Old Dominion, and we will always love Old Dominion," she says, "but we were ready to start the next chapters of our lives." They met at a party after a football game in 2010 and **married** in April 2016. Both also worked at Old Dominion until they moved last year. **Arielle's** now an employee of UNC-Chapel Hill, but she **wasn't conflicted** when they attended the Sept. 16 Carolina football game at ODU.



She was coordinator for student guides and the campus experience. He was director of football operations, taking care of logistics like travel for the team.

But it hasn't been easy. "We love living here now," Arielle says. "But it was really hard for us to leave. We learned so much there and made so many wonderful connections. That's the hardest part."

Stephen is a product success specialist for Teamworks, which provides digital platforms primarily for athletic teams to communicate by text among coaches, staff and players and manage schedules, among other things.



"I wore a little bit of my ODU blue and a little bit of my Carolina blue," Arielle said, "but I'm always going to root for ODU. It's in my blood. Carolina has basketball. We can let them win that."

### TRUE MONARCHS

"We have over 250 pieces of ODU apparel, and a whole closet in our house is dedicated to them," Arielle says. "I'm wearing an ODU shirt right now. There are 10 ODU shirts in my hamper. While I'm talking to you, I'm staring at an ODU gnome. I have an ODU charger for my phone. My car has two ODU stickers."





## Her fun prescription to stay fit: Dance

Some people swear by running or working out to stay in shape. **Bethanie Mickles '02** preaches dancing.

The world has been her pulpit this year. In January, she was named America's Fit Miss in a pageant affiliated with American Family Fitness, a chain of gyms based in Richmond, Virginia. Mickles has spread the dance gospel from Washington to Belize.

Just listen to her:

"Dance can benefit someone who has a very low fitness level or someone who's advanced. It increases flexibility and keeps your joints moving. It helps increase muscle mass. And you don't even realize you're exercising because it's fun."

Mickles was a Teletechnet student at Old Dominion, majoring in human services counseling while she lived in Lynchburg, Virginia. She'd visit Hampton Roads occasionally to take hula and Indian dance classes.

Mickles later received both a law degree and master's in library science from North Carolina Central University in 2005, graduating with honors. She took a job at a personal injury law firm in Durham.

But "working those crazy 80-hour work weeks, I had no time for dance." She had to find something else.

Mickles returned to Lynchburg in 2014. She works at a nonprofit, helping children with mental health issues who have committed crimes. Drawing on her varied background, she counsels her clients and represents them in court.

Mickles, 41, also is artistic director of World of Dance Performing Arts Company. She and the troupe recently visited India to promote dance. "Even a few hours a week can do wonders for your mental and physical health," she said.

- Philip Walzer

Bustin also teaches online graduate PR classes for George Washington University.

## 2010s



**Maria Lyons '10** was named 2017 Teacher of the Year at Phoebus High School in Hampton. Now teaching art at York High School, Lyons has graciously returned to the Virginia Beach Regional Higher Education Center to speak with students considering careers in art education.

**Megan Bailey '11 (M.S. Ed. '13)** was named Teacher of the Year at Trantwood Elementary School in Virginia Beach in 2017, the first year she was eligible to receive the award.

**Xavier Duckett '12** founded the nonprofit Humble Hustle Co. Inc. in Roanoke, Va., to mentor youths and divert troubled teens away from risky environments and into more positive outlets. He empowers their decision-making skills through nature, hiking and outdoor activities.

Former U.S. Marine **Kay Brown '13** has incorporated her loves of hip-hop dancing and a plant-based diet into a startup company called Sweat N Swag. Her goals are to teach health and fitness through individual sessions, custom plant-based meal plans and catering for private events. Her long-range plans are to open a café and dance studio for Sweat N Swag close to Hampton University.

**Arielle Villanueva '13 (M.Ed. '15)** reports that she and her husband, **Stephen '12**, are adjusting to post-Monarch life in Durham, N.C. "We loved Old Dominion, and we will always love Old Dominion," she says, "but we were ready to start the next chapters of our lives." They met



## ODU Women of Distinction

at a party after a football game in 2010 and married in April 2016. Both also worked at Old Dominion until they moved last year. Arielle's now an employee of UNC-Chapel Hill, but she wasn't conflicted when they attended the Sept. 16 Carolina football game at ODU.

**Connor Norton '15**, company manager for Virginia Stage Co. in Norfolk, created two projects that commemorate the lives of the 49 victims of a mass shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Fla., on June 12, 2016. Norton found "an element of catharsis" working on the first production, "After Orlando: Stories of Los 49." The play made its debut in June in Norfolk and focused on worldwide reactions to the massacre that targeted the LGBTQ community. Proceeds from ticket sales and solicitations will fund the second production, "The Orange Ave. Project," which Norton describes in a May 2017 VEER magazine article as "an ethnographic research art piece" that will "celebrate the lives of those that were lost, by remembering the days they gave to this world, not the day that they were all taken from us." It is scheduled to debut in mid-2018.

**Joshua Hedges '16** is a new ensign and surface warfare officer in the U.S. Navy, assigned to the U.S.S. Ramage.

**Andrae Riddick (M.S. Ed. '16)**, currently a special education teacher at King's Fork High School, was named Suffolk Public Schools' 2017 Citywide Teacher of the Year in April. He switched from forensic psychology into teaching after educators observed his success in mentoring students and advised a career change. Their advice proved sound!

**Eric Strobach '16** is a new ensign and student naval aviator in the U.S. Navy, based with the Naval Air Schools Command at Pensacola, Fla.

**Alicia White (Ed.S. '16)**, a mathematics teacher at Grassfield High School in Chesapeake, has been named 2017 High School Teacher of the Year for Chesapeake Public Schools.

Nine of the 12 recipients of the YWCA South Hampton Roads' Women of Distinction Awards this year have Old Dominion University connections.

Seven are alumnae: **Kim Curtis '82**, president and CEO of Tidewater Home Funding and a founding member of the Women's Initiative Network at ODU; **Marianne Dickerson '71 (M.S. '97)**, volunteer and retired teacher; **Dr. Noelle Gabriel '02**, vice chairwoman of the Norfolk School Board; retired **Navy Capt. Barbara Geraghty (M.P.H. '15)**; **Monica Hunter-Barnes (M.E.M. '91)**, a retired engineer and project manager at NASA Langley Research Center; **Vivian Paige (M.B.A. '94) (M.S. '16)**, a senior lecturer in accounting, and **Beth Patterson (M.B.A. '90)**, president and

founder of Waypoint Advisors.

**Shelley Mishoe**, a professor of community and environmental health and former dean of the College of Health Sciences at ODU, also was recognized.

And though honoree **Mike Harkins**, manager of registration services at Sentara Leigh Hospital, is not a graduate, we're proud to claim her as an honorary grad. Two of her daughters, **Kelley Harkins '99** and **Heather Harkins McKeating '01**, and a daughter-in-law, **Valerie Cullen Harkins '06**, are alums. Another daughter, **Erin Harkins Frazier**, a major in the Army, previously served as recruiting officer for ODU's Army ROTC. And son-in-law **Todd McKeating** is director of sales at the Ted.

## WEDDING BELLS



**Algen Fontecha Canonizado '97** and **Benner Cristobal Espiritu '06** happily announce their engagement, with plans to marry on March 3, 2018, at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Virginia Beach. Benner is a registered dental hygienist in Virginia Beach and Algen is a civil engineer for the City of Virginia Beach in its public utilities engineering division.

**Angeline Fontimayor '07** and **Christopher Antonio '14** were married on April 1 in Sacramento, Calif. Angeline works in the business office for Sutter Hospitals in Northern California; Chris is an import specialist for the Department of Homeland Security in San Francisco. Angeline says, "We love keeping up with ODU, even on the West Coast. Go Monarchs!"

**Phoebe Hitson '13 (M.S. '16)** and **Eric Overkamp '14** announced plans for a May 2018 wedding. Hitson, a graduate teaching assistant at ODU, is angling to become a three-time alumna; she is pursuing a Ph.D. from the Virginia Consortium Program in Clinical Psychology. Overkamp is a property claims adjuster with the United Services Automobile Association of Chesapeake.

## FUTURE MONARCH



**Morgan Roach '07** and **Ryan Roach '06** welcomed their third child, Charlotte, on July 27. The family lives in Orlando, Fla., where Ryan is pastor of Pursuit Church. Congratulations!

## OBITUARIES

**Carol DeRolf**, who worked at Old Dominion University's Child Study Center from 1974 to 2011, died on April 7. She was 83.

DeRolf taught preschool students as well as prospective early childhood teachers.

"Carol was an amazing, enthusiastic and dedicated preschool teacher," said Kimberly Williamson, director of ODU's Children's Learning and Research Center. "She was a mentor, friend and colleague to countless families, children and teachers in the Hampton Roads area and beyond."

The Darden College of Education presents an award named for DeRolf to a graduate student studying early childhood education.

**D. Alan Harris**, an associate professor emeritus of history, died on April 7 at the age of 87. Harris taught at Old Dominion for 34 years before he retired in 1997. Harris' specialty was U.S. history. "He was very much appreciated by the students," said Austin Jersild, the chairman of the history department. "He had a sense of humor and an easygoing presence that was well-known along the hallways of BAL." Retired art professor Ken Daley, who served with Harris on the Faculty Senate, said: "He was as fair-minded as they come, very rational and diplomatic."

**Carole Hines**, an associate professor emerita of English, died on March 7. She was 89.

Hines taught English and linguistics at Old Dominion from 1970 until her retirement in 1995. She returned in 1997 as adjunct faculty and taught until her "second retirement" in 2011.

Janet Bing, a retired professor of English, recalled Hines was administrator for freshman composition for several years. "Her specialty was sociolinguistics, and she and David Shores documented a num-

ber of local dialects. Some of her former students still tell me what a good teacher she was."

**Amanda Kinzer**, the director of Old Dominion's dance program and an associate professor in the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts, died on March 11. She was 44. Kinzer had taught at Old Dominion since 2001.

Marilyn Marloff, a professor of communication and theatre arts, said of Kinzer: "She was a beautiful performer, a wonderful choreographer and a fabulous teacher. She was kind, fair, and she was very dedicated to her students."

Old Dominion's University Dance Concert in April was dedicated to Kinzer, and two pieces featured her choreography. Her parents established a scholarship in her name for a dance student.

**Karl Knight**, who taught in the English department for 30 years, died on April 6 at the age of 86.

Knight joined Old Dominion in 1962. His essays explored the works of such authors as Saul Bellow, Ernest Hemingway and Herman Melville.

"Dr. Knight was an imposing figure and excellent lecturer," said Renee Olander, associate vice president for regional higher education centers, who received her master's degree in English in 1987. "As graduate program director for English, Dr. Knight guided me in an incredibly valuable independent study of Walt Whitman."

**Carl Schulz Jr.**, a longtime faculty member in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, died on March 19. He was 85.

Schulz taught at Old Dominion from 1962 until his retirement in 2009. Afterward, he continued to teach classes in abstract algebra and non-Euclidean geometry, said Hideaki Kaneko, the department's chairman.

"Professor Schulz was a demanding teacher who expected the best of the

students he taught," Kaneko said. "His influence was beyond measure," particularly for future secondary school math teachers. A scholarship in his name was created by his family this year to support students majoring in math or statistics.

**J. Taylor Sims**, a former business dean, died on May 30 on his 78th birthday.

Sims led the College of Business and Public Administration from 1994 to 2000, when he moved to the faculty as a professor of marketing. He retired in 2008.

"He was one of the most likable people who ever set foot on the campus, and he had remarkable knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of marketing," said John R. Broderick, Old Dominion's president.

Former President James Koch called Sims "a gentleman" and "an excellent mentor of young faculty."

## OTHER NOTABLE PASSINGS

**Elisabeth Burgess**, the wife of Charles Burgess, the former provost and dean of the College of Arts and Letters, died June 11. She was 80.

"Liz maintained a rich life outside the University, with a variety of jobs and her passion for local theater," said Old Dominion President John R. Broderick. "But she was a loyal supporter of Old Dominion and a fixture at University events."

**Fred Whyte**, former rector of Old Dominion's Board of Visitors, died on July 7. He was 70. Whyte had been a member of the board since 2010 and served as rector in 2013 and 2014.

Whyte retired in 2015 after 23 years as president of STIHL Inc. in Virginia Beach.

"His leadership style embraced integrity, decency and the personal touch," Broderick said. "He encouraged not just me and other administrators, but also faculty, staff and students."



Received Jan. 1–June 30, 2017

**Robert M. Fanney Jr. '38** of Virginia Beach, 1/8/17

**W. Clifton Jones '39** of Norfolk, 4/23/17

**Virginia Barrett Scherberger '39** of Norfolk, 2/15/17

**Joseph M. Collector '42** of Norfolk, 4/23/17

**Vernon G. Eberwine Jr. '43** of Suffolk, 1/8/17

**Robert J. Faulconer '43** of Norfolk, 5/2/17

**Edward C. Johnston '44** of Norfolk, 5/22/17

**Elliott W. Barnes '45** of Virginia Beach, 2/19/17

**William A. Bozarth II '46** of Virginia Beach and Orange City, Fla., 3/2/17

**Lawrence G. Davis '46** of Virginia Beach, 1/26/17

**Mary Frances Weyhgandt Correa '47** of Norfolk, 4/2/17

**Harvey E. White Jr. '47** of Norfolk, 2/11/17

**Edward L. Fitzpatrick Jr. '48** of Norfolk, 6/4/17

**Evelyn Rucker Hardee '49** of Virginia Beach, 2/26/17

**Shirley Ackiss Sutton '49** of Virginia Beach, 3/24/17

**Capt. Neuland C. Collier Sr., USN (Ret) '50** of Norfolk, 12/21/16

**Betty Jean Fulp '51** of Chesapeake, 5/5/17

**Lynanne Robinson Guyann '52** of Norfolk, 4/16/17

**Jacob R. Schwartz '53** of Norfolk, 6/19/17

**Joseph T. Buck Jr. '56** of Orange City, Fla., 4/27/17

**Lawrence P. Roesen '56** of Newport News, 2/26/17

**Dean S. Derby Jr. '59** of Norfolk, 1/21/17

**Jack A. Dunstan Sr. '59** of Stafford, Va., 1/21/17

**Wade L. Pearce Sr. '59** of Norfolk, 2/27/17

**Donald L. Wimberley '59** of Portsmouth, 2/14/17

**Donald B. Riley '60** of Newport News, 1/25/17

**Violette Der Sahakian Williams '60** of Virginia Beach, 2/3/17

**Jean Rourke Hillegass '61** of Norfolk, 3/20/17

**Samuel G. Seay '61** of Portsmouth, 6/9/17

**Ruby Thomas Perry '62** of Virginia Beach, 2/2/17

**H. Jackson Pettit III '62** of Suffolk, 5/15/17

**Cmdr. Clinton H. Smoke Jr., USCG (Ret) '62** of Asheville, N.C., 5/17/17

**Van E. Jones Jr. '63** of Reno, Nev., 4/7/17

**Suzanne H. Pierce '63** of Virginia Beach, 5/14/17

**Curtis M. Brooks '64** of Norfolk, 3/20/17

**Gallais E. Matheny '64 (M.A. '66)** of Ashland, Va., 5/22/17

**Donald J. Stump '65** of Newport News, 4/8/17

**Dale N. Williams '65** of Virginia Beach, 5/15/17

**Lt. Col. Ronald I. Severson, USMC (Ret) '66** of Redlands, Calif., 4/24/17

**Raymond J. Dorosz '67** of Virginia Beach, 12/24/16

**Bernard H. Glaser '67 (C.A.S. '72)** of Norfolk, 2/22/17

**Charles R. Holman Jr. '67** of Dunwoody, Ga., 6/18/17

**David R. Howell '67** of Norfolk, 1/13/17

**Constance Curtis Laws (M.S. Ed. '67)** of Norfolk, 1/6/17

**Deloris Willis Pate '67** of Chesapeake, 2/4/17

**Anne Schular Potter '67** of Suffolk, 5/18/17

**Marion Schaller '67** of Chandler, Ariz., 5/31/17

**Juanita Ward Speight '67** of Suffolk, 5/22/17

**James F. White '67 (M.S. '80)** of Virginia Beach, 4/20/17

**Joan Ellingston Marshall '68** of Exmore, Va., 6/14/17

**Carl G. Prendergast '68** of Virginia Beach, 6/16/17

**Frances T. Sledge '68** of Newport News, 4/10/17

**David E. Wilson '68** of Virginia Beach, 4/21/17

**Roland R. Andrews '69** of Wilmington, N.C., 4/5/17

**William A. Ficenec '69 (M.S. Ed. '77)** of Portsmouth, 1/22/17

**Donald F. White '69** of Norfolk, 2/1/17

**M. Roger Eshelman (M.S. '70)** of Williamsburg, 2/4/17

**Edward J. Jesneck '70** of Bassett, Va., 4/11/17

**Randolph S. Latham '70** of Chesapeake and Pittsboro, N.C., 6/21/17

**Thelma D. Morrison '70** of Virginia Beach and Dallas, Texas, 2/28/17

**Michael A. Powell '70** of Richmond, 2/26/17

**Patricia Meech Forlano '71** of Virginia Beach, 4/3/17

**Ethel Porter (M.S. Ed. '71, C.A.S. '86)** of Chesapeake, 1/25/17

**John E. Bishop '72 (M.S. '75)** of Chesapeake, 6/18/17

**John Paul Hite (M.B.A. '72)** of Columbia, S.C., 3/10/17

**Maj. Gen. Kenneth A. Jolemore, USA (Ret.) (M.B.A. '72)** of Raleigh, N.C., 3/5/17

**Charles A. Riffe '72** of Virginia Beach, 3/7/17

**Susan Tilley Bradway '73** of Virginia Beach, 4/17/17

**Lt. Cmdr. John F. Carr, USN (Ret) '73 (M.S. Ed. '79)** of Virginia Beach, 1/14/17

**R. Christopher Allen '74** of Virginia Beach, 12/31/16

**Murray D. Ball (M.B.A. '74)** of Charlotte, N.C., 4/21/17

**E.P. "Tex" Benton '74** of Lexington, Va., 4/19/17

**Joseph E. Briggs (M.U.S. '74)** of Chesapeake, 5/16/17

**Mary Branch Brown (M.S. Ed. '74)** of Hampton, 3/13/17

**Patricia M. Carlo '74** of Richmond, Va., 1/12/17

**Stanley N. Gimbert '74** of Eastsound, Wash., 12/17/16

**Kathryn Mapp Minga '74 (M.S. Ed. '77, '90)** of Chesapeake, 2/24/17

**J. Golden Poulson, USAF (Ret) (M.U.S. '74)** of Logan, Utah, 3/31/17

**Col. G. Robert Akam, USA (Ret) (M.B.A. '75)** of Ormond Beach, Fla., 5/9/17

**Edward S. Fields '75 (M.S. Ed. '99)** of Norfolk, 4/3/17

**Lawrence B. Kurzer '75** of Norfolk and Southeast Asia, 3/10/17

**Demetria B. Manifold (M.S. Ed. '75)** of Palmyra, Va., 1/23/17

**Marvin K. Rhodes '75** of Tucker, Ga., 1/12/17

**Michael D. Hardesty '76** of Norfolk, 6/6/17

**Maj. Leonard K. Hiteshew, USA (Ret) '76** of Merritt Island, Fla., 4/12/17

**John C. Russ '76** of Chesapeake, 3/1/17

**Stephen L. Wright III '76** of Suffolk, 4/30/17

**Charles H. Bowens III (C.A.S. '77)** of Chesapeake, 3/15/17

**Janet Rae Collins '77** of Alexandria, La., 1/25/17

**Barbara H. Cromwell (M.S. Ed. '77, C.A.S. '83, Ph.D. '89)** of Virginia Beach, 5/19/17

**Bryce B. Dunavent '77 (M.S. '83)** of Troy, Ohio, and Rochester, N.Y., 4/21/17

**Cmdr. Michael R. Hopkins, USN (Ret.) '77 (M.S. Ed. '93)** of Chesapeake, 5/25/17

**Otto F. Horton Jr. (M.B.A. '77)** of Kernersville, N.C., 6/4/17

**Lt. Paul R. Karch, USN (Ret) '77 (M.S. Ed. '79, C.A.S. '85)** of Virginia Beach, 3/21/17

**Lorena Reed King (M.S. Ed. '77)** of Mechanicsville, Va., 1/28/17

**Lucille Bouldin Popp '77** of Virginia Beach, 5/7/17

**Linda Fisher Rose '77** of Yorktown, Va., 4/8/17

**Larry D. Torrey '77** of Carrollton, Va., 5/14/17

**Gale C. Arnoux '78 (M.A. '86)** of Tampa, Fla., 3/26/17

**Judith J. Ruben Ink (M.S. Ed. '78)** of Chesapeake, 2/11/17

**Bonnie Lou Kofsky '78** of Virginia Beach, 3/25/17

**Carmon W. "Sap" Rochelle '78** of Hampton, 1/16/17

**Catherine Munden Hillegass '79** of Virginia Beach, 1/5/17

**Florence Moss Ruehe (M.S. Ed. '79)** of Hampton, 2/10/17

**Stuart G. Smith (M.P.A. '79)** of Williamsburg, 6/2/17

**C. Franklin Boynton Jr. '80** of Virginia Beach, 6/4/17

**Reather Fields Brothers '80** of Virginia Beach, 5/9/17

**Linda Rinehart Green '80** of Kill Devil Hills, N.C., 4/12/17

**G. Rogers Jennings Jr. '80** of Atlanta, Ga., 2/7/17

**Donald P. Kirkpatrick '80** of The Villages, Fla., 12/17/16

**Craig W. Klinefelter '80** of Norfolk, 6/14/17

**Gerald E. Lane '80** of Chesapeake, 4/18/17

**Norma B. Rowe '80** of Portsmouth and Nashville, Tenn., 2/9/17

**Glenda F. Sawyer (M.U.S. '80)** of Norfolk, 4/14/17

**Edward J. Dunnigan Jr. '81** of Manteo, N.C., 3/8/17

**Carolene Lee Eckley '81** of Virginia Beach, 3/10/17

**Milton R. Liverman (M.S. Ed. '81)** of Suffolk, 2/2/17

**Minnie Crockett '82** of Chesapeake, 3/22/17

**Mark M. Fentress '82** of Clayton, N.C., 6/18/17

**CPO Bobby W. Owen, USN (Ret) '82** of Windsor, Va., 4/17/17

**Alice N. Everhart (M.S. Ed. '83)** of Portsmouth and Tallahassee, Fla., 6/13/17

**Thomasine J. Kashin '83** of Hampton, 5/3/17

**Kathleen Foreman Hassen '84** of Virginia Beach, 3/10/17

**Cherri D. Klaus '84** of Worden, Ill., 12/22/16

**Nancy C. Morris (M.A. '85)** of Daphne, Ala., 2/3/17

**George B. Rose '85** of Williamsburg, 4/10/17

**Kevin J. Burnsworth '86** of Lancaster, Mass., 6/2/17

**Carolyn Cunningham (M.S. Ed. '86)** of Bellbrook, Ohio, 6/6/17

**M. Lee Payne (HON '86)** of Norfolk, 3/18/17

**Mary Ella DeHaven (M.S. Ed. '87)** of Newport News, 2/14/17

**Anne Pruitt Everett (M.S. '87)** of Suffolk, 6/10/17

**Capt. Haig H. Pakradooni III, USN (Ret) (M.B.A. '87)** of Virginia Beach, 3/14/17

**Eric C. Robeson '87** of Yorktown, Va., 2/24/17

**Capt. Charles A. Futch, USN (Ret) (C.A.S. '88)** of Virginia Beach, 2/24/17

**Michael Namisnak '88 (M.S. Ed. '90)** of Virginia Beach, 2/1/17

**Amy Smith Roesner '88** of Alexandria, Va., 6/7/17

**Theresa Ann Ruffing (M.S. Ed. '88)** of Portsmouth, 5/27/17

**Constance L. Solheim (M.A. '88)** of Virginia Beach, 2/10/17

**Camille A. Chaffee '89** of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 3/23/17

**James R. Marshall '89** of Richmond, 2/28/17

**Bruce S. Maust '89** of Jennerstown, Pa., 5/14/17

**Fredric D. Rumley '89** of Pulaski, Va., 3/12/17

**Patsy E. Bolton (M.S. Ed. '90)** of Chesapeake, 6/29/17

**Senior CPO Gerald T. DeForge, USN (Ret) '90 (M.A. '99)** of Newport News, 12/28/16

**Christina B. Milligan '90 (M.S. Ed. '92, C.A.S. '99)** of Virginia Beach, 2/12/17

**Christopher C. Lang '91** of Spring Grove, Ill., 6/15/17

**Floydette Edwards Ewing (M.S. Ed. '93)** of Midlothian, Va., 4/12/17

**William E. Felts III '93** of Galveston, Texas, 5/10/17

**Judith Ann Murphy '93, '98** of Norfolk, 6/26/17

**Brian T. Sarmiento '93** of Virginia Beach, 12/29/16

**Elzie Glenn Whitlock (M.S. '93)** of Virginia Beach, 4/13/17

**Anne G. Cox '94 (M.S. Ed. '99)** of Morehead City, N.C., 1/18/17

**Diane S. Dew (M.S. Ed. '94)** of Chesapeake, 1/13/17

**Marc S. McCray '94** of Cary, N.C., 6/15/17

**Andrew P. Altman (M.S. '95)** of Virginia Beach, 5/11/17

**Kimberly E. Cassidy (M.S. Ed. '97)** of Virginia Beach, 3/7/17

**Robyn Taylor Linner '98** of Suffolk, 1/10/17

**Cheryl Mcallister Carter '99** of Bristol, Tenn., 6/25/17

**Catherine A. O'Quinn (M.S. Ed. '00)** of Manassas, Va., 3/19/17

**James S. McKinney Jr. '01 (M.S. Ed. '05)** of Cary, N.C., 5/6/17

**Shaun D. Krueger '02** of Virginia Beach, 6/13/17

**Sharon Scott Paul '02** of Spotsylvania, Va., 2/6/17

**LaVonne J. Burger-Hoffman (M.S. Ed. '03)** of Yorktown, Va., 1/30/17

**Travis J. Galloway (M.E.M. '03)** of San Antonio, Texas, 1/8/17

**Cheryl M. Coleman '05** of Newport News, 2/5/17

**Kimberly Peterson Gretz '07** of Glade Spring, Va., 2/11/17

**Eric D. Hruska (M.S. '08)** of Mason, Ohio, 4/13/17

**Latoya M. Wilkins '08** of Norfolk, 5/20/17

**Michael A. Griffith (M.S. Ed. '09)** of Orlando, Fla., 2/13/17

**Kristina J. Aguilar '12** of Virginia Beach, 3/6/17

**Cpl. Wilbert C. Gore Sr., USA (Ret) (HON '12)** of Portsmouth, 3/28/17

**Linda Hodges Lewis (M.S. Ed. '13)** of Portsmouth, 3/10/17

**Kenneth D. Mallory '15** of Quinton, Va., 5/7/17

**Kevin S. Garczynski '16** of Virginia Beach, 1/29/17

**F. Gray Kiger III (enrolled)** of Norfolk, 2/10/17



# Where are we?

See how well you know Old Dominion's campus. Can you identify the locations of all six photos? Send your guesses to [pwalzer@odu.edu](mailto:pwalzer@odu.edu) and we'll name the first five people who got all of them correct in the spring issue of Monarch magazine.



PHOTOS: SHARA WEBER, GIRL IN HAMMOCK BY COREY NOLEN



## TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS

Where's the best (or most unusual) place you ever went on vacation? Send your reviews and photos to [pwalzer@odu.edu](mailto:pwalzer@odu.edu)  
We'll share your recommendations in Monarch magazine next year.

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## THE Monarch Way

ODU Entrepreneurs in Action

THE Monarch Way, managed by ODU's Enactus Club, is a retail space where ODU students and university-affiliated entrepreneurs offer their company products to the Hampton Roads community!

[odu.edu/themonarchway](http://odu.edu/themonarchway)

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[www.nauticus.org/escapeship](http://www.nauticus.org/escapeship)

The advertisement for Dickens Christmas Towne features a vibrant red background with a Christmas tree and silhouettes of people. At the bottom, there is a row of various characters, including a Santa Claus figure. A small logo for "ESCAPESHIP Saving Bobby Wilder" is located in the bottom right corner.

Celebrate the holidays  
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This advertisement shows three pieces of ODU licensed merchandise: a dark blue hoodie with the ODU logo, a blue mug with the ODU logo, and a blue duffel bag with the ODU logo. The background is a light blue with white snowflake patterns.

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Top  
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-Forbes

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The advertisement for Old Dominion University features the university's logo at the top, which includes a crown. Below the logo is a photograph of a lion statue sitting on a pedestal in a fountain. The text "Among 'America's Top Colleges' -Forbes" is prominently displayed, and the website "odu.edu" is at the bottom.



# Save the Date!

## ODU Alumni Association's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual GOLF TOURNAMENT

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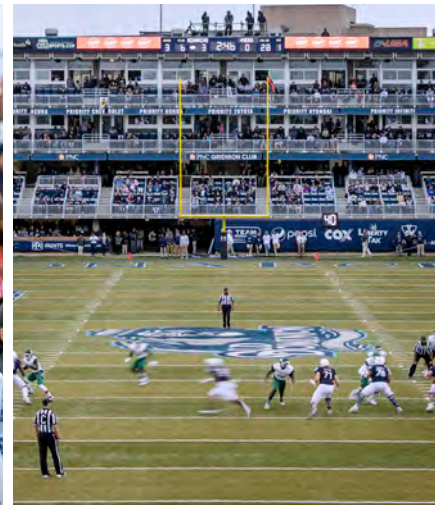
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## Homecoming 2017



PHOTOS COURTESY OF COREY NOLEN PHOTO



# MAJOR Monarch



Lt. Harry McBrien (left) with Deputy Chief Pat Gallagher of the Virginia Beach Police Department leading the Monarch football team.

Diana McBrien laughs as she recalls seeing Harry for the first time. She and her family were living in Navy housing in Virginia Beach when Harry and his family moved into the house across the street. Trying to catch a glimpse of the handsome new teenager, Diana pulled down the slats of her blinds. She was smitten. Years later, after both families had moved, the only sign of a crush long carried was the shape of the blinds at the front of Diana's house—they'd been permanently bent into a large smile—proof of hundreds of peeks out the window.

As time moved by, Harry and Diana began dating and then married. Harry joined the Marine Reserves and then began his education at TCC and continued at ODU, majoring in political science. Five years later their daughter, Lauren, was born. Soon after, the deployments began. Harry was gone for 10 months while serving in the Horn of Africa. It was a difficult time for the family, but especially for Lauren,

then 8. Diana was determined to turn Harry's absence into something positive. So she compiled Lauren's letters into a book, called "Dear Daddy," not only as a keepsake for Harry, but also to prepare other military families for deployments.

Along the way, Harry encouraged Diana to continue her education, and she earned a master's degree in education and is currently working in Norfolk as a special education teacher.

Harry works for the Virginia Beach Police Department, which he says has provided incredible support during three tours that took him to Jordan, the Horn of Africa and Iraq. During each trip abroad, Harry led initiatives to partner with organizations to benefit communities in those countries, like Flip-Flops for Africa, which provides children with shoes.

Harry says he has the best job at the VBPD, where he's now a lieutenant in special operations. After his retirement from the

military, Harry helped the department create a military liaison program. It was designed to reduce the possibility of young military members being prosecuted criminally, instead turning them over to the military, thereby saving their records. "It's been six years in the works," Harry said, "and it's the first program of its kind." He hopes it will serve as a model for other military communities.

The McBriens' connections to ODU run deep. They were ecstatic when ODU launched a new football program. They waited a year and a half to buy season tickets. When game day finally arrived, Harry was deployed for the third time, missing the entire first season. So Diana decided to take the game to Harry. She and Lauren went to the first game—their first time on campus while Harry was managing air traffic control in Iraq. Once in their seats, Diana videotaped the game, then sent it to Harry with a 2009 Game Day shirt. He wore it in Iraq while watching the game, and on many days to follow.

In the second season, Harry and Diana tailgated and watched the games together. And that tradition continues today. Harry, dubbed "Major Monarch" by his friends, can be seen in his hard hat, boots and shorts (yes, even in inclement weather), running up and down the sidelines, bringing fans to their feet while leading cheers for the Monarchs.

This level of commitment to ODU also persuaded Harry to include Old Dominion in his estate plans. Together, the McBriens chose to direct their future gift to a student-athlete scholarship.

And this year, it is Lauren who will be away from home as she begins the physician assistant program at JMU. Like her parents, Lauren's goal is to help people, and to give back to her community.



Diana, Harry, and Lauren McBrien



Harry and Diana with friends at one of their tailgates.

To see how other alumni and friends are supporting ODU, please visit [plannedgiving.odu.edu](http://plannedgiving.odu.edu)

Have you made a provision to leave a future gift to Old Dominion University? If so, please let us know so we may help you carry out your wishes. Please contact the office of gift planning at 757-683-6563 or visit our estate planning website at [plannedgiving.odu.edu](http://plannedgiving.odu.edu)



#### Office of Gift Planning

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